Examining Breaks and Resistance in Medication Adherence Among Adolescents With ADHD as Associated With School Outcomes

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Journal of Attention Disorders (2018)
DOI: https://doi.org/10.1177/1087054718763738

Abstract

Objective:
Pharmacological interventions combined with behavioral treatment have been associated with better outcomes for children with ADHD. Yet, as children age into adolescence and gain autonomy, they may choose not to adhere to taking a prescribed medication. The purpose of the current study was to examine school outcomes among adolescents with ADHD who take medication breaks versus resisting medication with respect to grades and school behaviors.

Method:
We statistically controlled for a variety of variables such as the child’s age, sex, the presence of side effects, and parent’s relationship with child. Approximately half of the sample of adolescents with ADHD exhibited some form of medication nonadherence.

Results:
The results of the current study suggest that more positive school outcomes in terms of behaviors and grades are associated with adolescents taking breaks from their ADHD medication rather than resisting their medication.

Conclusion:
This result would indicate that not all forms of medication nonadherence have the same association with school outcomes in terms of grades and behaviors.