

LISDEXAMFETAMINE FOR ADHD

This guide is for individuals, parents, & carers. It explains how lisdexamfetamine is used to manage ADHD.

Always follow your doctor's advice and read the Consumer Medicines Information (CMI) for full details.

WHAT IS LISDEXAMFETAMINE? (Psychostimulant Medication)

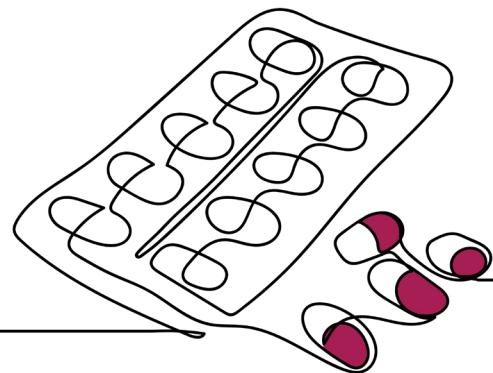
Lisdexamfetamine is a **long-acting stimulant** used to treat:

- **ADHD** — improves attention, reduces impulsivity and hyperactivity.
- **Binge Eating Disorder (BED)** — approved overseas, but not in Australia/NZ.

Brand name (AU/NZ): Vyvanse capsules (20mg, 30mg, 40mg, 50mg, 60mg, 70mg).

KEY POINTS

- ✓ Not addictive when prescribed for ADHD
- ✓ Safe to stop suddenly, but ADHD symptoms will return
- ✓ Some take 'medication holidays' (weekends/holidays) – discuss with your doctor
- ✓ Goal = maximum symptom control with minimal side effects
- ✓ Keep a daily log of mood, appetite, sleep, and focus to guide adjustments
- ✓ If the medication doesn't feel right, talk to your doctor



HOW DOES IT WORK?

- Lisdexamfetamine is a **prodrug**: it becomes active only after being absorbed and converted in the body (by red blood cells).
- It increases dopamine and noradrenaline in brain areas controlling attention, planning, memory, and impulse control.
- This improves brain communication and reduces ADHD symptoms.

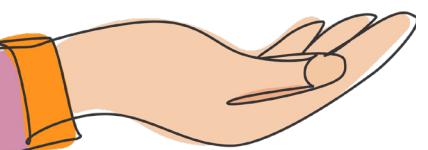
HOW TO TAKE IT

- **Once daily in the morning**, with or without food
- swallow capsules whole, or open and mix contents with water or soft food
- usually starts working in about **60 minutes**; effects last **10-12 hours**
- avoid taking too late in the day (may interfere with sleep)
- treatment usually begins with a **low dose (20-30mg)**, then increased gradually
- finding the right dose may take **6-8 weeks** – it's a trial process.

IMPORTANT ►

Lisdexamfetamine and dexamfetamine doses are not interchangeable.

SAFETY AND MONITORING



- Store securely, ideally in a locked cupboard.
- Only the prescribed person should take it.
- Regular check-ups will monitor:
 - response to treatment
 - height, weight, heart rate, blood pressure
 - sleep, appetite, emotions, and behaviour.
- If accidental ingestion or overdose occurs, call the Poisons Information Line and seek emergency care.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS

Most are mild and temporary. Talk to your doctor if worried.

VERY COMMON (≥1 IN 10):

- headache (often settles in 4–6 weeks)
- reduced appetite (often returns at night)
- trouble sleeping (avoid late doses; use good sleep routines)
- mood swings, especially when medication wears off.

COMMON (<1 IN 10):

- nausea, stomach upset, dry mouth
- anxiety, dizziness
- fast heartbeat
- tics or repetitive movements.

UNCOMMON – SEE YOUR DR IF NOTICED:

- sadness, anger, or unusual mood changes
- hallucinations or paranoia
- excess sweating or shakiness
- slowed growth in children (height and weight should be checked).

SEEK URGENT HELP IF:

- swelling of face, lips, or tongue
- suicidal thoughts or severe agitation
- chest pain or irregular heartbeat
- seizures
- prolonged, painful erection (priapism).



HELPFUL RESOURCES



AUSTRALASIAN ADHD PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION (AADPA)

AADPA – LIVED EXPERIENCE RESOURCES

HEALTH DIRECT – ADHD

NPS MEDICINEWISE

ADHD NZ

UNDERSTOOD.ORG

BEYOND MEDICATION

Medication is just one part of ADHD treatment. A **multimodal approach** is most effective, including:

- Understanding ADHD (psycho-education)
- Supportive routines and reminders
- School adjustments and communication
- Parenting strategies for consistency and behaviour guidance
- Therapy (psychological or behavioural)
- Workplace support with structure and clear expectations

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Starting medication can bring relief but also uncertainty or grief, especially after a late diagnosis. These feelings are normal. Talking to a psychologist or peer support group may help.