

## **FACT SHEET on ADHD and its consequences**

By Sandra Kooij, associate professor of psychiatry, VUMc Amsterdam/PsyQ the Hague

People with ADHD have from childhood been facing difficulties with inattention, restlessness, impulsive behavior and mood instability. In ADHD, due to these symptoms, self regulation is failing. The long term consequences have been shown impressive as well as long lasting. That is why ADHD needs to be taken seriously. The good news is, ADHD can be treated well, even in old age! So let's try to prevent the detrimental outcomes of untreated ADHD!

### **So, what are the consequences of ADHD?**

In ADHD compared to controls:

1. **30-60% higher accident rates** ([everywhere](#), and [in traffic](#))
2. [2x higher mortality rate due to accidents](#)
3. [Increased rates of other psychiatric disorders: depression, anxiety](#), antisocial behavior, oppositional behavior, sleep problems, eating disorders
4. [Increased substance abuse](#): 2x higher smoking rates, more alcohol and drugs use
5. [Internet use addiction](#)
6. [Higher suicidal attempt rates](#)
7. [Criminality](#)
8. [Learning problems, lower grades](#), job hopping, lower income
9. [Risky sexual behavior](#)
10. [2-3x more teenage pregnancies](#)
11. [Impaired driving performance](#)
12. Financial problems, [gambling](#)
13. [Conflicts, divorce, loneliness](#)
14. [Intimate partner violence](#)
15. [40-70% increased obesity rates](#)
16. **And obesity is associated with: diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancer, leading to a lower life expectancy**

ADHD is effectively treated with multimodal treatment consisting of psycho-education, medication, parent training and support, coaching and/or cognitive behavior therapy.

**From the real life, and large national registry studies from a.o. Sweden, we now know that in periods when treated with ADHD medication, compared to periods of no treatment, there are:**

1. [30-40% lower motor vehicle accidents](#) in adults & [40% lower emergency room visits in children](#)
2. [Better driving performance](#)
3. [60-70% lower suicide rates](#)
4. [30-40% lower criminality rates](#)
5. [Lower substance abuse rates](#), especially when treated with higher dosages