

BALANCING ADHD INFORMATION



There are so many resources for adults with ADHD that figuring out who or what to listen to and when can be overwhelming. Thankfully, that means there are options that match how we learn best! However, ADHD exists differently for different people, and every source may not speak to our situation. It is important to think about balancing where we get our ADHD information from. These are some things to think about when using different resources.

SOCIAL MEDIA

PROS: Some social media spaces require you to sign up for an account to join the group or see information. As well, although online communities can be a way to share your story with people tackling similar obstacles, it should not replace conversations with a health professional who has worked with ADHD adults. People online can be very convincing, but they can also be misinformed. Online communities can also require you to share things about you ADHD that you aren't comfortable with sharing just yet in order to gain access to information. For example, you might have to share personal information while asking a question, and though we hope we can trust people in these spaces, we do not always know who may see what we share.

CONS: Online communities like Facebook groups and Twitter-spheres can be a way to connect with other adults who have ADHD, share your experiences, and get answers from (hopefully) real people. There are so many social media accounts from people who create ADHD content full-time in the form of memes, videos, and motivational posts. If you have an account, and find people and groups that you like, it can often be a way to stumble upon symptoms, treatment options, and perspectives that you did not know existed!

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

PROS: There are countless stories of people recognizing they had ADHD because somebody they are close to had been previously diagnosed. Having a loved one--be it family, friend, chosen family, or partner--that also has ADHD can be a tremendous comfort. We are able to ask them questions that we might not be comfortable asking others. They might understand the way we speak both out loud and through out body movement, so they may better relay information in a way that makes sense for us. They can also be a really great starting point for recommending an ADHD coach, therapist, or other ADHD professional.

CONS: We may feel as though our loved ones have all the answers because they have been diagnosed or have recognized their symptoms longer. While they can be a helpful starting point and a strong part of your support system, your ADHD may be widely different from theirs. You might need different treatment options or require different ways to cope. They may also be new to navigating ADHD and don't know everything. And if you have loved ones who do not have ADHD, and they tell you it isn't real, DEFINITELY DO NOT LISTEN TO THOSE PEOPLE.

ADHD SPECIALISTS

PROS: ADHD health professionals and coaches who specialize in working with ADHD adults can be a very valuable resource. They work with people like us daily and have answered many of the questions we have hundreds of times. These sorts of specialists can be more familiar with our behavior and might not be as bothered if we need to fidget while we talk to them or if we lose attention momentarily. They are also aware that ADHD has different types and can often recommend treatment options based on how we experience ADHD and how that impacts our lifestyle.

CONS: Finding a specialist can sometimes be hard if there is limited availability. They can also be expensive if we do not have insurance or if our insurance does not cover their appointments. Although specialists are trained to work with ADHD adults, they still have their own views of how ADHD should be treated. For example, some adults need medication and some specialists do not believe in treating ADHD with medication. If we do not feel comfortable with somebody we're working with, it can impact how we learn to cope with our ADHD. They also have their own biases and might not give us the information we need because of how they perceive us.

GENERAL PHYSICIAN

PROS: In many cases, you can speak to your general healthcare provider (doctor, physician, nurse practitioner) about your ADHD symptoms. They are able to prescribe medication, but you may need a formal diagnosis from a specialist before they can. Receiving information from a general healthcare provider can sometimes be more accessible for those of us who may not be able to afford going to a separate specialist.

CONS: Although general physicians can be a great resource, they do not specialize in ADHD and may hold misconceptions about what ADHD means for adults. They may also limit the information they share with us as a result of internal biases. Visit to a healthcare provider can also be expensive when we don't have insurance or we have to take off work.

WEB SEARCH

PROS: A good ol' web search can help introduce us to just how many resources are available for being an adult with ADHD. If we have access to the internet, a web search can be an inexpensive way to start gathering information about our ADHD, diagnosis, treatment, and coping. We can find website or blogs that present the information in ways that work for us. Some of us like reading long, personal stories and some of us like quick bullet points with important information with the option of reading more later if we'd like.

CONS: The internet is a HUGE, and everything we read on the internet is not necessarily true or meant for our situation. It can be overwhelming and hard to figure out how what we should type into the search to get the information we need. Sometimes we don't know what we need which can add to the frustration. Like the other resources, we should not stick to web searches alone.



This information should not replace advice from medical professionals.

