According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, 11 percent of children have been diagnosed with ADHD; but statistics show, 4-5% of adults also has ADHD. Adderall is the drug of choice for both children and adults.

Adderall is a combination of two types of stereo isomer amphetamines. Between the years 2007 and 2011 prescriptions written for Adderall went up 40%. Just to give you an idea; the DEA says close to 50 million prescription stimulant drugs like Adderall were dispensed in 2011 to treat symptoms of ADHD. That’s a lot of amphetamines.

I spoke to one of my colleagues who has had great effectiveness with adults who want an alternative to Adderall. I'd like to share part of her treatment protocol for adult ADHD.

Patients with ADHD experience stress far greater than the average person because they are feeling constantly overwhelmed. And keep in mind, researchers tell us that stress plays a major role in every disease.

The cause of ADHD can be a lack of energy due to mitochondrial dysfunction, brain inflammation, one of many forms of anemia, a diet loaded with refined foods and additives, leaky gut, blood sugar dysfunction, poor digestion, food sensitivities or a combination thereof.

The drug Adderall increases your levels of dopamine, norepinephrine, serotonin and even glutamate in your brain. One of the reasons Adderall is addictive is because over time, the natural production of dopamine is reduced, so patients have difficulty ex-
experiencing pleasure without the drug.

For adult ADHD, my colleague took a slightly different approach from Adderall. Rather than push the dopamine pathway she supplied the precursors to facilitate the acetylcholine and serotonin pathways. Her goal was to promote brain clarity with natural supplements. She also added adaptogenic botanicals and the mineral lithium.

Lithium has neurogenic and neuroprotective effects on the brain. One study compared lithium carbonate to Ritalin in a randomized, double-blind, crossover study in adults with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. They summarized "In this preliminary study, lithium and Ritalin, (Methylphenidate) produced similar improvements on the primary outcome measure and on measures of irritability, aggressive outbursts, antisocial behavior, anxiety, and depression."

Li-Zyme Forte by Biotics Research Corporation uses a vegetable culture sprouted concentrated food form of lithium which avoids all the side effects of pharmaceutical lithium carbonate.

To support serotonin pathways my colleague recommends the natural formula called Mood Enhancer by Biotics Research Corporation which supplies the cofactors needed to make serotonin.

To support the acetylcholine pathway she used a formula called Cognitive Enhancer, developed to enhance brain function by stimulating neurogenesis. Cognitive Enhancer by Biotics Research Corporation contains 100 mg of Acetyl L-Carnitine, 100 mg of GPC Choline, 25 mg of a standardized Ginkgo Biloba and 5 mg Huperzia Serrata, a form of Huperzine A.

Ask your clinician about these formulas used for adult ADHD. Also ask about the adaptogenic formula Bio-Ashwagandha which has natural anti-anxiety properties.

Generally, I suggest a blood test to look for B6, folate, magnesium, zinc and iron deficiencies. Blood levels are not just to detect disease; they can identify vitamin and mineral deficiencies in your blood as well as hormones, and other important markers. I have attached a paper and pencil test to help you understand some of the symptoms of ADHD. See the link on this page.

Sometimes, just knowing you have underlying symptoms of ADHD allows you to give yourself grace when you are frustrated. Knowing there are natural ways to enhance cognitive function whether you have diagnosable ADHD or not could give you a distinct advantage.

And if you are already on Adderall or another prescription drug, talk to your Wellness professional about other options. It could be a complete game changer for you.