



Adderall Addiction

When a Medication Prescribed to Help Leads to Dependency and Addiction

What is Adderall Addiction?

Adderall addiction is a chronic brain disorder involving compulsive use of prescription amphetamine despite mounting consequences. Because Adderall is prescribed by doctors for ADHD, the line between medical use and dependence is uniquely difficult to recognize. The brain adapts to require the drug to maintain focus, energy, and mood regulation, making it extremely difficult to stop without long-term clinical support.

What Does It Look Like?

- **Running Out of Prescriptions Early**
They finish a 30-day supply in two or three weeks, then scramble to cover the gap.
- **Performance Collapses Without the Pill**
Work, school, or daily responsibilities fall apart the moment they can't access their medication.
- **Self-Medication Beyond What's Prescribed**
They take more than directed, crush tablets, or combine Adderall with other substances.
- **Increasing Secrecy Around How They Obtain It**
Multiple prescribers, borrowed pills, or online purchases replace or supplement the original prescription.

Why Does Adderall Addiction Become Chronic?

When someone has tried to quit Adderall more than once and keeps returning to it, the pattern reflects how dependence is deeply ingrained with their routines and brain chemistry.

- 1) **Disrupts Natural Dopamine Production**
Chronic amphetamine use depletes the brain's natural reward system—a deficit that can take months to stabilize.
- 2) **Addressing Cognitive Function**
Restoring attention, motivation, and emotional regulation without the drug requires extended clinical support.
- 3) **Underlying ADHD, Anxiety, or Depression Drives Use**
Typically, co-occurring conditions were either the original reason for the prescription or developed alongside the misuse.

Prevalence:

3.9 Million U.S. adults misused prescription stimulants in 2024¹

Co-Occurrence:

4.6x more likely to develop a SUD with co-occurring ADHD²

Relapse Risk:

40-60% of individuals with a SUD relapse after treatment³

Sources: ¹ SAMHSA, 2024 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (2025). ² Hartman et al., Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews (2023). ³ National Institute on Drug Abuse, Treatment and Recovery (2020).

Long-Term Treatment for Adderall Addiction

Prescription amphetamines **change the brain's dopamine system over months and years of use**. A short-term program can manage the acute crash, but it cannot restore the cognitive function, emotional regulation, and motivation that the drug replaced. Families watch their loved one leave short-term programs struggling to function in daily life, and within weeks they have relapsed.

Our long-term, progress-based model gives the brain **time to recalibrate its dopamine production** while addressing the ADHD, anxiety, and depression that sustain the cycle. Clients advance when they demonstrate real behavioral transformation, not when a calendar says their time is up.



"Families often hear their loved one say they need Adderall to function. After years of dependence, that feels like the truth. Long-term treatment gives the brain time to prove otherwise."

 **Brook McKenzie, LCDC**
CEO, Burning Tree Ranch



Dual Diagnosis Treatment for Adderall Addiction

When Adderall addiction is treated without addressing the **underlying co-occurring mental health conditions** that drive use, the cycle of relapse continues. ADHD, anxiety disorders, and depression co-occur at significantly elevated rates with prescription stimulant misuse, and each condition reinforces the other. Treating only the substance use leaves the out the cognitive and emotional deficits that allow the addiction to take hold.

At Burning Tree Ranch, an individualized treatment plan **addresses amphetamine dependence alongside co-occurring ADHD**, anxiety, and mood disorders through evidence-based therapies including CBT, DBT, and neurofeedback, building toward sustainable sobriety.

Dual Diagnosis Defined:

The presence of **both a substance use disorder and a mental health condition** occurring together. Effective treatment for dual-diagnosis addictions must address both aspects simultaneously.



Have Other Treatment Programs Missed the Deeper Issues?

Burning Tree Ranch is the Nation's only authentic long-term treatment program for chronic relapse. Call us at (866) 287-2877 or visit us online at www.BurningTree.com.

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