



Report: ADHD Drugs May Stunt Growth, Long-Term Effectiveness Unknown

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Drugs used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) have no long-term effectiveness and could stunt your child's growth, News.com.au is reporting.

And scientists have conceded that test results that prompted the parental craze to dole out the drugs to their kids, may have been exaggerated.

In what is sure to generate debate, BBC's Panorama program Sunday aired the results of a long-term monitoring program of 600 children across the U.S. since the early 1990's.

The Multimodal Treatment Study of Children with ADHD study concluded that while drugs such as Ritalin and Concerta worked in the short term, there was no demonstrable improvement in children's behavior after three years of medication.

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Eight years ago, studies found one year of medication worked better than behavioral therapy in a finding that influences medical practice.

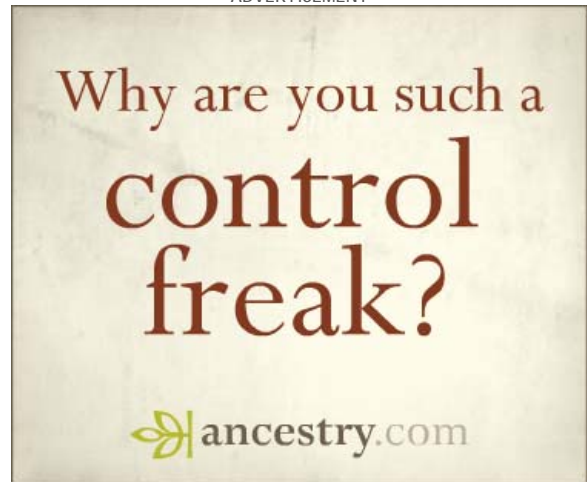
But the report's co-author from the University of Buffalo Professor William Pelham said he now believes the findings were overstated.

"I think that we exaggerated the beneficial impact of medication in the first study," he told BBC. "We had thought that children medicated longer would have better outcomes. That didn't happen to be the case. In the short run (medication) will help the child behave better, in the long run it won't. And that information should be made very clear to parents."

The medication also may stunt the growth of the children taking it, he said.

"The children (taking the medication) weren't growing as much as other kids both in terms of their height and in terms of their weight," Pelham said.

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