

# Vyvanse (Lisdexamfetamine) – Parent Information Handout

## What Is Vyvanse?

Vyvanse (lisdexamfetamine dimesylate) is a prescription medication approved by the FDA to treat Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in children aged 6 years and older. It is a long-acting stimulant that helps improve focus, attention, and impulse control. Vyvanse is a "prodrug," meaning it is inactive until your child's body converts it into its active form, which allows for a smooth, extended effect throughout the day (approximately 10-13 hours).

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## How to Give This Medication

- **Give it once daily in the morning**, with or without food.
  - **Avoid giving it in the afternoon or evening**, as it may cause trouble sleeping.
  - Vyvanse comes as a **capsule** or a **chewable tablet**.
  - **Capsules** can be swallowed whole. If your child has trouble swallowing capsules, you may open the capsule and mix the entire contents into yogurt, water, or orange juice. Have your child consume the mixture right away — do not store it.
  - **Chewable tablets** must be chewed thoroughly before swallowing.
  - **Never split a dose.** Always give one full capsule or tablet. Do not give less than one capsule or tablet per day.
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## Dosing

- The usual **starting dose is 30 mg once daily**.

- Your child's doctor may increase the dose by 10 mg or 20 mg each week based on how your child responds and tolerates the medication.
  - The **maximum dose is 70 mg per day**.
  - Do not change the dose without talking to your child's doctor.
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## Common Side Effects

Most side effects are mild and may improve over the first few weeks. The most common include:

- **Decreased appetite and weight loss** — This is the most common side effect. Offer nutritious meals and snacks when your child is hungry (often in the evening after the medication wears off). Talk to your doctor if you are concerned about weight loss.
  - **Trouble sleeping (insomnia)** — Giving the medication early in the morning can help. Maintain a consistent bedtime routine.
  - **Stomach pain or nausea**
  - **Headache**
  - **Irritability or mood changes**
  - **Dry mouth**
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## Growth Monitoring

Stimulant medications can slow growth (height and weight) in some children. Your child's doctor will closely monitor your child's growth at regular visits. If your child is not growing as expected, the doctor may adjust or temporarily stop the medication.

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## When to Call the Doctor

Contact your child's doctor if your child experiences:

- Significant weight loss or refusal to eat

- Severe trouble sleeping that does not improve
- Increased irritability, aggression, or mood swings
- New or worsening anxiety
- Tics (repetitive movements or sounds)

**Seek immediate medical attention if your child experiences:**

- Chest pain, shortness of breath, or fainting
  - Seeing or hearing things that are not there (hallucinations)
  - Signs of circulation problems in fingers or toes: numbness, coolness, pain, color changes, or unexplained wounds
  - Signs of an allergic reaction: rash, swelling of the face or throat, difficulty breathing
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## **Important Safety Information**

- **Heart health:** Before starting Vyvanse, your child's doctor should be aware of any heart problems or family history of heart disease, sudden death, or irregular heartbeat. Blood pressure and heart rate will be checked at follow-up visits.
  - **Mental health:** In rare cases, stimulant medications can cause new psychiatric symptoms such as hallucinations or manic behavior, even in children without a prior history. Report any unusual behavior changes to your doctor.
  - **This is a controlled substance.** Vyvanse has the potential for misuse. Store it in a safe place out of reach of others. Never share this medication.
  - **Do not stop suddenly** without talking to your child's doctor.
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## **Storage and Handling**

- Store at room temperature (68°F to 77°F / 20°C to 25°C).

- Keep in a secure location away from other children and household members.
  - Dispose of unused medication properly — ask your pharmacist about medication take-back programs.
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## Tips for Getting Started

- **Keep a log** of how your child responds to the medication, including any side effects, changes in appetite, sleep, mood, and school performance. This will help your doctor adjust the dose.
  - **Attend all follow-up appointments.** Your doctor will want to check your child's weight, height, blood pressure, and heart rate regularly.
  - **Medication is one part of treatment.** Behavioral strategies, school accommodations, and a supportive home environment are also important parts of managing ADHD.
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## Questions?

Write down any questions or concerns and bring them to your child's next appointment. You can also call your child's doctor or pharmacist at any time.