

Nonmedical Use of Adderall: Halakhic Considerations

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I take my neighbor's son's Ritalin to stay up until 3 a.m. finishing Shabbos preparations. I mean, so what if I borrow this stuff? ... I need this to get me through the day. If you would just give me a prescription ... My neighbor's psychiatrist just writes her a prescription for the medication every month without even thinking about it ... What about my neighbor who takes her son's Ritalin every erev Shabbos? ... I only take a pill or two every day to get my work done. (Dr. Jacob Freedman, a Harvard-trained psychiatrist based in Jerusalem, describing his medical visit with Rivki)^{1,2}

Dr. Jacob Freedman's evaluation of Rivki confirmed that she did not suffer from depression, anxiety, or ADHD, and remained steadfast in his refusal to prescribe a stimulant in the absence of a diagnosis that would indicate a need for the medication.

Rivki's request for prescription stimulants such as Adderall (amphetamine/dextroamphetamine salts) or Ritalin (methylphenidate hydrochloride) for **nonmedical use** raises several halakhic considerations.

¹ <https://mishpacha.com/stimulating-discussion/>.

² Rivki is a young, overburdened, working mother of four.

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- 1) Does the nonmedical use of prescription stimulants harm the body, violating the obligation to protect one's health?
- 2) Would halakhah prohibit misuse of Adderall because it can lead to addiction?
- 3) Does the nonmedical use of prescription stimulants to "get one's work done" misrepresent one's abilities and constitute *geneivat da'at* or cheating?
- 4) Does the nonmedical use of prescription stimulants tamper with who we are, interfering with G-d's plan?
- 5) Does Rivki violate *dina d-malkhuta dina* by using a stimulant prescribed for someone else?
- 6) What other prohibitions does one violate when feigning ADHD to obtain a prescription from a physician?
- 7) Does halakhah consider Rivki's neighbor's physician, who prescribes Adderall without a formal evaluation or monitoring, liable for his actions?

To answer these questions, we must explore the scientific background.

Adderall, the most frequently prescribed stimulant for ADHD, is an effective treatment for those who suffer from this disorder, dramatically improving focus and wakefulness. However, the National Survey for Drug Use and Health estimates that 5.1 million Americans engage in prescription stimulant misuse, defined as use without one's own prescription; in greater amounts, more often, or longer than prescribed; or use in any other way not directed by a doctor.³ The DEA classifies Adderall as a class II substance whose possession, use without a prescription or in excess of the prescribed amount, and distribution are illegal. Nevertheless, more than 42 percent of those who use stimulants do so without a prescription.⁴ These statistics might underestimate the true prevalence of this problem, since those who abuse Adderall often deny doing so. The most common reasons adults misuse are to stay alert or concentrate (60 percent), study (21 percent), get high (15 percent), and facilitate weight loss (4 percent).^{5,6}

³ <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018.pdf>.

⁴ <https://drugabuse.com/stimulants/adderall/>.

⁵ Adderall helps to suppress appetite.

⁶ Compton, Wilson M et al., "Prevalence and Correlates of Prescription Stimulant Use, Misuse, Use Disorders, and Motivations for Misuse Among Adults in the United States," *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, vol. 175, 8 (2018): 741-755. doi:10.1176/appi.ajp.2018.17091048.

Adults most commonly procure the drug from friends or relatives. Buying or stealing from those they know is infrequent. The vast majority of those who provide the drug to others have a doctor's prescription.

Adderall misuse is particularly rampant among college students, with dramatic variation between institutions.^{7,8} A Bates college study indicates that one in three students abused Adderall at some point.⁹ Adderall abuse has infiltrated the Orthodox Jewish world. A 2017 article in the *YU Observer* reported that nearly 60 percent of pre-health students at Stern College know a peer who took non-prescription Adderall.¹⁰ Stimulants are easily accessible on college campuses. The University of Wisconsin-Madison conducted an experiment to determine how long it would take to obtain Adderall at a library; researchers were able to purchase a pill in under a minute.¹¹ A student without a diagnosis of ADHD who wants a prescription can easily conduct an internet search for its symptoms and convince a physician that he has the condition.¹² Physicians have difficulty distinguishing between those with true ADHD and those who merely seek Adderall for nonmedical benefit.¹³ Even those with ADHD might abuse their medicine by overusing or using it for nonmedical purposes.¹⁴ Students who misuse Adderall typically attend competitive colleges, participate in fraternities, and have low grade-point averages and high levels

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- ⁷ Rolland, Amber D. and Smith, Patricia J., "Aided by Adderall: Illicit Use of ADHD Medications by College Students," *Journal of the National Collegiate Honor Council* — Online Archive. 603 (2017).
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nhcjournal/603>.
 - ⁸ Wilens, T. E., Adler, L. A., Adams, J., Sgambati, S., Rotrosen, J., Sawtelle, R., Utzinger, L., and Fusillo, S., "Misuse and Diversion of Stimulants Prescribed for ADHD: A Systematic Review of the Literature," *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 47.1 (2008): 21–31.
 - ⁹ Graff Low K, Gendaszek AE., "Illicit use of Psychostimulants among College Students: A Preliminary Study," *Psychology, Health, and Medicine* 2002. 7(3):283-287.
 - ¹⁰ <https://yuobserver.org/2017/12/adderall-use-pre-health-students-discuss-open-secret/>.
 - ¹¹ <https://cssl.osu.edu/posts/632320bc-704d-4eef-8bcb-87c83019f2e9/documents/descriptive-report-cpds-2015.pdf>.
 - ¹² <https://www.today.com/parenting-guides/what-parents-should-know-about-adderall-campus-t177752>.
 - ¹³ Sollman, M. J., Ranseen, J. D., & Berry, D. T. R. (2010). Detection of feigned ADHD in college students, *Psychological Assessment*, 22(2), 325–335, <https://doi-org.ezp-prod1.hul.harvard.edu/10.1037/a0018857>.
 - ¹⁴ Arria, A. M., Caldeira, K. M., O'Grady, K. E., Vincent, K. B., Johnson, E. P., and Wish, E. D. "Nonmedical Use of Prescription Stimulants among College Students: Associations with ADHD and Polydrug Use," *Pharmacotherapy* 28.2 (2008): 156–69.

of academic stress.^{15,16} The attraction to this population is that it makes them more social, and enables them to stay up all night partying and still be alert and focused the next day.¹⁷

Adderall misuse is becoming more common among teenagers,^{18,19} and pharmacy and medical students.²⁰ Athletes abuse prescription stimulants to maintain physical fitness and improve concentration.²¹ ESPN noted that Major League Baseball players hide behind a diagnosis of ADHD to obtain the drug directly from a doctor.²²

Rivki's story reflects a growing phenomenon of Adderall abuse among mothers trying to balance work, family, and home. Between 2002 and 2010, Adderall prescriptions for women aged 26-39 rose 750 percent.²³ Although some women take the drug for ADHD, as prescribed, others use it as a diet pill or because they feel it "makes them better mothers," combats fatigue, gets things done, keeps them focused, and helps them cope with stress.²⁴ Some women obtain stimulants by using the medicine prescribed for their children. Addiction centers report increasing numbers of moms who misuse Adderall and seek treatment.²⁵

¹⁵ Rolland, Amber D. and Smith, Patricia J., "Aided by Adderall: Illicit Use of ADHD Medications by College Students," *Journal of the National Collegiate Honor Council* — Online Archive. 603 (2017).

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/nchcjournal/603>.

¹⁶ <https://www.today.com/parenting-guides/what-parents-should-know-about-adderall-campus-t177752>.

¹⁷ Teter CJ, McCabe SE, et al., "Illicit Use of Specific Prescription Stimulants Among College Students: Prevalence, Motives, and Routes of Administration," *Pharmacotherapy* 2006, 26(10):1501-1510.

¹⁸ https://tulsaworld.com/opinion/mothers-new-little-helper-mdash-adderall/article_d96e7db7-9023-54ef-b405-c78d45bf03a2.html.

¹⁹ <https://drugabusestatistics.org/>.

²⁰ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3489818/>.

²¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3489818/>.

²² Associated Press. *ADHD exemptions on rise in MLB*. New York, NY: ESPN; 2009.

²³ <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2018/p0118-ADHD-prescriptions-increasing.html>.

²⁴ <https://parenting.kars4kids.org/adhd-prescription-drug-abuse-know-wrong/>.

²⁵ https://qconline.com/lifestyles/the-mommy-addiction-abusing-prescription-drugs-to-be-supermom/article_7a5faafc-ea79-5fdf-852a-cbfdcd06562e.html.
[ps://www.thefix.com/content/adderall-addicted-american-moms90314](https://www.thefix.com/content/adderall-addicted-american-moms90314).

1) Does the Nonmedical Use of Prescription Stimulants Harm the Body, Violating the Obligation to Protect One's Health?

Devarim 11:9 and 4:15 command us to protect our health, “Only beware for yourself, and greatly beware for your soul...” and “But you should greatly beware for your souls...” The mitzvah to construct a *ma'akeh*, a parapet, on a flat roof to prevent falling, requires us to avoid behavior that will endanger health. *Berakhot* 55a proscribes standing next to an unstable wall and engaging in dangerous activities. Rambam, *Laws of Murder and Preserving Life* 11:5, writes, “Many things are forbidden by the Sages because they are dangerous to life. If one disregards any of these and says, ‘If I want to put myself in danger, what concern is it to others?’ he is lashed for his disobedience.” Rambam, *Hilkebot Deot* 4:1, explains that a healthy body is necessary to perform mitzvot and worship G-d. *Be'er Ha-Golah*²⁶ adds that someone who endangers himself effectively despises and rejects the will of G-d, displaying the highest form of contempt and lawlessness. Halakhah permits individuals diagnosed with ADHD to use Adderall to treat their disorder because the benefits outweigh potential risks.^{27,28} For those with ADHD, treatment with Adderall would fall under the mitzvah of *ve-nishmartem*, guarding one's health. Does Adderall **misuse** violate this obligation?

Adderall is structurally similar to methamphetamine, otherwise known as meth or crystal meth. The two drugs elicit similar dose-related acute effects.²⁹ When used as directed to treat ADHD, Adderall is highly effective and safe, with minimal risk of addiction. However, when used improperly, it can be addictive and lethal. The FDA's list of potential dangers associated with Adderall include sudden death, myocardial infarction, stroke, arrhythmia, seizures, psychosis, anxiety, depression, unwanted weight loss, malnutrition,^{30,31} decreased growth, tics, headaches, mood

²⁶ *Be'er HaGolab, Hoshben Mishpat* 427:10.

²⁷ <https://www.medethics.org.il/ask/%D7%A7%D7%99%D7%97%D7%AA%20%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%98%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%9F%20%D7%9C%D7%A9%D7%9D%20%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%93%20%D7%AA%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%94%20%D7%9C%D7%9E%D7%90%D7%95%D7%91%D7%97%D7%9F%20d/>.

²⁸ <https://www.kikar.co.il/159170.html>.

²⁹ Kirkpatrick, M. G., Gunderson, E. W., Johanson, C., Levin, F. R., Foltin, R. W., and Hart, C. L., “Comparison of Intranasal Methamphetamine and d-Amphetamine Self-Administration by Humans,” *Addiction* 107.4 (2012): 783–91.

³⁰ https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2005/021303s009lbl.pdf.

³¹ <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/prescription-stimulants>.

changes, and psychiatric effects such as aggression, hallucinations, and paranoia. Adderall misuse increases the risk of these adverse events because one may fail to identify the correct dose, drug interactions, and underlying cardiovascular abnormalities. Without medical supervision, Adderall misuse is more likely to lead to overdose or serious harm.^{32,33} Taking Adderall with other substances, such as alcohol, increases the risk of fatal overdose,³⁴ masking indicators of intoxication that might otherwise slow or stop consumption.³⁵ Injecting Adderall, a phenomenon common among athletes, can achieve a more intense high, increasing the risk of overdose. In response to athletes dying from such overdoses, in 1968, the International Olympic Committee banned the use of amphetamines, including Adderall.

In the United States, calls to poison control centers and emergency department visits related to Adderall use have increased 76 percent and 156 percent, respectively, primarily due to nonmedical use, attesting to the growing dangers of this phenomenon.³⁶ The fact that more than 50 percent of nonmedical prescription stimulant users report taking other prescription drugs, such as opioids, sedatives, and tranquilizers, with stimulants, suggests that Adderall misuse could serve as a gateway to other prescription drugs.³⁷

This data indicate that nonmedical use and misuse of Adderall are harmful. However, even a possible or uncertain danger would render Adderall halakhically prohibited. In his gloss on *Shulhan Arukh: Yoreh De'ah* 116:5, Rama rules *hamira takanta me-issura*, and thus we rule stringently in order to avoid possible danger. Citing Rama's principle, Rav Paalim believes that each person must protect himself and his family from *safek*

³² <https://drugabuse.com/stimulants/adderall/>.

³³ <https://www.verywellmind.com/adderall-overdose-4689996>.

³⁴ <https://www.addictioncenter.com/stimulants/adderall/symptoms-signs/>.

³⁵ Sepúlveda DR, Thomas LM, McCabe SE, Cranford JA, Boyd CJ, Teter CJ., "Misuse of Prescribed Stimulant Medication for ADHD and Associated Patterns of Substance Use: Preliminary among College Students," *J Pharm Pract*. 2011;24(6):551-560. doi:10.1177/0897190011426558.

³⁶ Chen LY, Crum RM, Strain EC, Alexander GC, Kaufmann C, Mojtabei R., "Prescriptions, Nonmedical Use, and Emergency Department Visits Involving Prescription Stimulants," *Journal Clinical Psychiatry*. 2016;77(3):e297-e304. doi:10.4088/JCP.14m09291.

³⁷ Chen LY, Strain EC, Crum RM, Storr CL, Mojtabei R., "Sources of Nonmedically Used Prescription Stimulants: Differences in Onset, Recency and Severity of Misuse in a Population-Based Study," *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*. 2014;145:106-112.

sakanah and *nezikei haguf*, possible danger and bodily harm.³⁸ Rav Moshe Feinstein echoes this position.³⁹ Rav Professor Avraham Steinberg believes that the side effects of prescription stimulant misuse render it forbidden. However, he cautions against “throwing the baby out with the bathwater,” and emphasizes, “stimulants have an important role for appropriately diagnosed and treated individuals.”⁴⁰

Do Rationalizations for Adderall Misuse Mitigate These Dangers?

In a survey of 1,811 college students, 81 percent believed that illicit use of ADHD medications was “not very dangerous” or was “slightly dangerous”; 2 percent thought that it was “very dangerous.”⁴¹ They justify these assumptions from their personal experience and the observation that “no one has ever died on campus and it is used a lot.” In interviews with 175 students, the perception of the drug’s innocuousness was so pervasive that none of the participants admitted that stimulants posed a significant health risk.⁴² They argued that they used Adderall in moderation, at low doses, and sporadically, only before exams. They reasoned that Adderall must be safe because it is produced by a licensed pharmaceutical company, has FDA approval, and is prescribed by doctors and administered to children.⁴³ They also erroneously framed ADHD medications as harmless, and as socially acceptable as antifatigue aids, equating them with coffee, Diet Coke, and NoDoz, an over-the-counter anti-sleep aid that contains 200 mg of caffeine per tablet. If this portrayal of Adderall misuse as risk-free were correct, misuse might pose less of a *sakanah*, and halakhah might be more inclined to permit it.

Scientific data, however, indicate that these justifications are medically flawed. Using Adderall even once is enough to exacerbate a compromised heart; small amounts can be fatal. Although Adderall has FDA approval,

³⁸ *Ben Ish Hai, Shanah 2, Parshat Pinchas, Hakdamah.*

³⁹ *Iggerot Moshe, Even Ha-Ezer 4:73:1.*

⁴⁰ Personal Communication of Rabbi Dr. Shamai Grossman with Rav Avraham Steinberg, April 2022.

⁴¹ DeSantis AD, Webb EM, Noar SM., “Illicit Use of Prescription ADHD Medications on a College Campus: A Multimethodological Approach,” *J Am Coll Health*, 2008 Nov-Dec; 57(3):315-24. doi: 10.3200/JACH.57.3.315-324. PMID: 18980888.

⁴² DeSantis AD, Hane AC., “‘Adderall Is Definitely Not a Drug’: Justifications for the Illegal Use of ADHD Stimulants,” *Subst Use Misuse*. 2010; 45(1-2):31-46. doi: 10.3109/10826080902858334. PMID: 20025437.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

its chemical components are as potentially dangerous and addictive as uncontrolled substances sold on the streets. This is why first-time criminal Adderall offenses carry a five-year mandatory federal sentence. Comparing Adderall to anti-fatigue aids masks the drug's seriousness.

Self-Medicating in Halakhah

Perhaps the most compelling justification for Adderall misuse is self-medication. Studies indicate that those who misuse Adderall are twice as likely to have ADHD than those who do not, suggesting that some who misuse this drug do have underlying, untreated ADHD, and are self-medicating.⁴⁴ Although this might be the case for some illegal users, others fail to understand the true nature of ADHD, trivializing it as nothing more than a periodic inability to concentrate.^{45,46}

Rav Professor Steinberg believes that halakhah prohibits self-medication.⁴⁷ Although there is no explicit Biblical verse for this prohibition, it falls into the category of behaviors that the rabbis prohibited based on logic. In *Bava Kamma* 46a, Rav Ashi asks, “Why do I need a verse to derive this? It is based on logical reasoning that one who suffers from pain goes to the doctor!” Rav Steinberg states that one who is not a medical expert may not use medication based on personal opinion, change dosages according to his understanding, or use his friend’s medication because he believes it will help him. Rather than self-medicating for a condition that one might not have, taking a medicine that one might not need or that might be contra-indicated, or using a potentially dangerous dosage, those who think that Adderall might help them should undergo formal evaluation for ADHD. If they truly have the condition, they can receive a prescription under medical supervision.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ <https://www.psychiatrist.com/jcp/neurodevelopmental/adhd/nonmedical-stimulant-use-in-college-students/>.

⁴⁵ <https://www.medethics.org.il/ask/%D7%9C%D7%A7%D7%99%D7%97%D7%AA%20%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%98%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%9F%20%D7%9C%D7%A9%D7%9D%20%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%93%20%D7%AA%D7%95%D7%A8%D7%94%20%D7%9C%D7%9E%D7%90%D7%95%D7%91%D7%97%D7%9F%20d/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.kikar.co.il/159170.html>.

⁴⁷ Personal Communication Rav Professor Avraham Steinberg with Rav Dr. Shamai Grossman, January 2022.

⁴⁸ <https://www.psychiatrist.com/jcp/neurodevelopmental/adhd/nonmedical-stimulant-use-in-college-students/>.

Does Halakhah Permit the Use of Adderall for Nonmedical Purposes?

Shut Sha'arei Tzedek, Yoreh De'ah 143 prohibits seeking medical care for nonmedical issues because G-d granted doctors a license to heal only for medical purposes and pain relief. He prohibits fertility treatments and medical care to correct birth defects if the deficiencies do not cause pain or sickness. *Tzitz Eliezer* 11:41 accepts *Sha'arei Tzedek's* prohibition against medical interventions for nonmedical purposes, and holds that these interventions are outside the bounds of *refuah*. Although Rav Waldenburg prohibits plastic surgery, he permits fertility treatments, citing extensive halakhic precedent allowing efforts to promote the birth of Jewish children.

In *Iggerot Moshe, Hoshen Mishpat* 2:66, Rav Moshe Feinstein permits plastic surgery to improve one's appearance and marriage prospects, and to relieve *tza'ar*, mental anguish.⁴⁹ Rav Ovadiah Yosef also permits plastic surgery.⁵⁰ If the deformity interferes with a woman's marriageability, he considers the surgery a mitzvah. He cites *Mishneh Halakhot, Hoshen Mishpat* 105:2, which classifies an individual who experiences *tza'ar* from his or her appearance and pursues plastic surgery as a *holeh*, although perhaps not a *holeh she-yesh bo sakanah*. He suggests that plastic surgery performed to relieve *tza'ar* qualifies as *refuah* and falls under the rubric of *ve-rapo ye-rape*, the Divine license to heal. Rav Yosef argues that modern techniques have significantly reduced the risks of plastic surgery. He believes that if an experienced surgeon performs the surgery, there is no *hashash sakanah*, concern for danger. If one may incur medical risk to improve appearance and relieve mental anguish, might halakhah allow one to incur the risks of illicit Adderall to improve academic or professional performance?

Several fundamental differences between plastic surgery and illicit Adderall invalidate this comparison. First, plastic surgery involves a one-time risk that will permanently relieve the mental anguish of a physical deformity, while illicit Adderall can require daily use to improve academic performance temporarily. Second, a review of forty studies found that in more than half, Adderall does not enhance cognition in adults without ADHD.⁵¹ Researchers hypothesize that the "cognitive benefits" people describe from Adderall reflect a skewed perception of their work in light

⁴⁹ *Ketubot* 52b.

⁵⁰ *Yabi'a Omer* 8, *Hoshen Mishpat* 12.

⁵¹ Bagot KS, Kaminer Y., "Efficacy of Stimulants for Cognitive Enhancement in Non-Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Youth: A Systematic Review," *Addiction*. 2014;109(4):547-557. doi:10.1111/add.12460.

of the burst of energy from the stimulant or the placebo effect.⁵² While the drug can make them feel more alert, it does not improve their academic abilities.⁵³ To illustrate the minimal effects of Adderall on academic performance, researchers randomly assigned students to caffeine or placebo and then told half of the participants in each group that they had received Adderall and half that they had received caffeine. Subjects expecting Adderall reported stronger amphetamine effects and performed better on a memory test than those expecting caffeine, illustrating the power of suggestion to enhance performance, and suggesting that caffeine might be a reasonable substitute for stimulants.⁵⁴ In a small study that randomly assigned adults without ADHD to Adderall or placebo, Adderall appeared to inhibit cognitive abilities.⁵⁵

Third, although halakhah recognizes the importance of alleviating psychological distress, and one could argue that illicit Adderall can minimize academic anxiety and boost self-confidence, there are legal and far less dangerous ways to achieve this goal, such as placebos, caffeine, and exercise.

Fourth, plastic surgery is legal while illicit use of Adderall is not. Finally, Rav Steinberg believes that the level of risk determines whether halakhah permits an intervention for nonmedical benefit. If the individual strongly desires the intervention, and the intervention is low-risk and performed under medical supervision, halakhah permits it.⁵⁶ If the risk is high, halakhah prohibits the intervention, just as it prohibits any nonmedical behavior. He cites the example of competitive sports to support this distinction. Halakhah permits participation when the level of risk is low but prohibits it when the level of risk is high. Indeed, Rav Ovadiah Yosef dismisses the risks of plastic surgery when a skilled physician performs

⁵² <https://www.consumerreports.org/drug-safety/skip-adderall-as-study-drug/>.

⁵³ Weyandt LL, Oster DR, Marraccini ME, et al., "Prescription Stimulant Medication Misuse: Where Are We and Where Do We Go from Here?" *Exp Clin Psychopharmacol*. 2016;24(5):400-414. doi:10.1037/pha0000093.

⁵⁴ Looby A, Zimmerman L, Livingston NR, "Expectation for stimulant type modifies caffeine's effects on mood and cognition among college students," *Exp Clin Psychopharmacol*, 2021 Mar 18. doi: 10.1037/pha0000448.

⁵⁵ Weyandt LL, Oster DR, Marraccini ME, et al., "Prescription Stimulant Medication Misuse: Where Are We and Where Do We Go from Here?" *Exp Clin Psychopharmacol*.

⁵⁶ Personal Communication, Professor Rav Avraham Steinberg with Rabbi Dr. Shamaï Grossman, January 2022.

the procedure. Even if the risk of illicit Adderall is low, unlike plastic surgery, those who engage in this practice use the medication without medical supervision.⁵⁷

Shomer Peta'im HaShem

Although halakhah requires us to avoid dangerous activities, the principle *shomer peta'im HaShem*, G-d protects the foolish (*Tehillim* 116:6), which appears throughout the Talmud, permits some level of risk.⁵⁸ One may engage in potentially dangerous activities and rely on G-d's protection if the activity is widely practiced and society considers its risks acceptable. *Helkat Ya'akov* (3:11) invokes this principle to permit flying in an airplane or traveling in a car. Illicit Adderall is prevalent on college campuses, and the vast majority of students believe that it is safe,^{59,60} suggesting that society, or at least college campus culture, is willing to accept its risks. Does *shomer peta'im* apply to misuse of Adderall?

In 1981, Dr. Fred Rosner decried the dangers of cigarette smoking and rejected the possibility that *shomer peta'im HaShem* could justify the practice. He wrote, "The fact that so many Jewish people smoke is no justification for this dangerous and life-threatening practice. The 'pleasures' of adultery are not condoned by even the most liberal-minded Jew. Why then should the pleasures of smoking, which also involve Biblical

⁵⁷ The implications of how halakhah views the use of medications and medical interventions for nonmedical purposes are far-reaching. In his discussion of the halakhic issues surrounding nonmedical use of prescription stimulants, Rav Dr. Tomer Mevorach contrasts the position of Rav Waldenburg, who believes that enhancing medicines that have no medical purpose do not qualify as *refuah*, with that of Rav Yosef, who considers such interventions *refuah* if the benefits outweigh the risks. He proposes several potential *nafka minot*, practical differences, between these two positions, including how halakhah views the use of enhancing medicine on Shabbat, and physician compensation. He suggests that use of enhancing medicine should not occur at the public's expense; it must take place outside of the health care system without the support of Israeli health funds or the use of its physician services. Mevorach T, "NonMedical Use of Attention Deficit Medicines: Ethics and Halacha," *Assia* 121-2, 7-18.

⁵⁸ *Niddah* 31a, *Shabbat* 129b, *Yevamot* 12b, *Ketubot* 39a, *Niddah* 45a, *Nedarim* 35b, *Avodah Zarah* 30b, *Yevamot* 72b.

⁵⁹ DeSantis AD, Webb EM, Noar SM., "Illicit Use of Prescription ADHD Medications on a College Campus: A Multimethodological Approach," *J Am Coll Health*, 2008 Nov-Dec;57(3):315-24. doi: 10.3200/JACH.57.3.315-324. PMID: 18980888.

⁶⁰ DeSantis AD, Hane AC., "Adderall Is Definitely Not a Drug': Justifications for the Illegal Use of ADHD Stimulants."

prohibitions ... be treated more leniently?"⁶¹ The reality that so many college students misuse Adderall and believe it to be safe does not give this practice the halakhic status of *shomer peta'im HaShem*.

Poskim have defined the parameters of *shomer peta'im HaShem*, and illicit Adderall use fails to meet these requirements. In *Iggerot Moshe, Even Ha-Ezer* 4:10, Rav Moshe Feinstein overwhelmingly endorsed premarital Tay Sachs testing, and does not invoke *shomer peta'im HaShem* to justify its omission. This stance suggests that in his view, this halakhic principle does not apply when the danger is known and easily avoided. Thus, *shomer peta'im HaShem* cannot apply to the illegal use of Adderall, as one can easily avoid the danger by abstaining. In *Tzitz Eliezer* 15:39, Rav Eliezer Waldenburg concludes that this principle applies to situations where real world experience has not indicated otherwise, and many have engaged in this practice without harm. He argues that this halakhic principle cannot apply to cigarettes, since extensive medical literature overwhelmingly confirms the dangers of smoking. He points to the fact that large, powerful countries require warning labels on cigarette boxes as proof that society has embraced this data and refused to accept the dangers of this product. Rav Waldenburg suggests that scientific data and medical expertise determine whether *shomer peta'im HaShem* applies, and not a misguided public perception of safety.

Several facts confirm that society recognizes and renounces the dangers of the illicit use of Adderall, including the condemnation of this practice by the medical and legal communities and by national and local governments. Congressional legislation, which classifies Adderall as a Class II substance, prohibits its illicit use and entrusts the DEA and local legal agencies to enforce it. Furthermore, the FDA has issued a black-box warning, which appears on the box of Adderall and the accompanying printed materials. It only issues such warnings when medical studies indicate that a drug carries a significant risk of serious or even life-threatening adverse events. It is the strongest alert FDA can require. The warning states, "Misuse of amphetamines may cause sudden death and serious cardiovascular adverse events."

Two mitigating circumstances might justify the application of *shomer peta'im HaShem* to the illicit use of Adderall. Jewish law allows one to take risk for *parnasab*, livelihood, and the performance of a mitzvah. *Bava Metzia* 111b asks, "Why does the worker climb the tree and risk his life? Is it not to earn his wages? Therefore, the least we can do is pay him on time!" Thus, *Noda b-Yebudah, Yoreh De'ab* 10, forbids hunting for sport but

⁶¹ Rosner, F., "Cigarette Smoking and Jewish Law," *J. Halacha Contem. Soc.* 4: 33-45 (1982).

permits it for employment. Similarly, *Iggerot Moshe*, *Hosben Mishpat* 1:104, permits one to play ball professionally. To earn a living, one may take risks that would otherwise be prohibited. Although halakhah might prohibit the misuse of Adderall for recreational purposes, perhaps it would allow it to improve grades, secure a better job, or gain acceptance into a more prestigious school (which would ultimately increase one's employment prospects), to meet professional deadlines, increase work productivity, and enhance the performance of professional athletes.

Shomer peta'im HaShem would not, however, permit illicit Adderall to enhance income because halakhah permits incurring risks for professions only when those risks are reasonable. Although Rav Moshe Feinstein permitted one to play ball professionally despite the inherent risks, Rav Moshe Tendler explains that this ruling was based on the relative rareness of sports injuries. However, recent data has revealed that injuries, especially concussions, are much more prevalent. In light of this, "Football may be prohibited."⁶² Rav Tendler suggests that there are limits to how much risk is allowed for *parnasah*. Given the risks of Adderall misuse, the dangers of Adderall may exceed those allowed for *parnasah*. Second, while *shomer peta'im HaShem* allows one to incur risk for *parnasah*, it does not permit breaking the law and violating *dina d-malkhuta dina* (see below) for professional advancement. Third, as noted, Adderall does not enhance professional performance. The American Medical Association (AMA) rejects claims that Adderall is an effective study drug.⁶³ Like the warning labels on cigarettes that for *Tzitz Eliezer* invalidate applying *shomer peta'im HaShem* to smoking, the AMA statement against Adderall's ability to enhance performance at work and school demonstrates that society is unwilling to accept its risks for these purposes.

Pesahim 8b teaches that those performing a mitzvah are safe throughout the course of its performance. Rivki misuses Ritalin to prepare lavish meals for Shabbat, have a spotless home, do *hesed*, and succeed in her job. *Ha'aretz* reported on the common practice in the *haredi* world of prescribing Ritalin to yeshivah students who do not carry a diagnosis of ADHD or any other mental illness, to enable them to learn Torah, "because the child is not suited to sit in a chair and learn *Gemara* all day."⁶⁴ Does the principle that those engaged in performing a mitzvah will know no harm justify Ritalin misuse to learn Torah or perform other mitzvot?

⁶² https://www.chabad.org/multimedia/video_cdo/aid/5014947/jewish/The-Right-to-Try.htm. Minutes 22:22-23:40.

⁶³ <https://www.ama-assn.org/press-center/press-releases/ama-confronts-rise-nootropics>.

⁶⁴ <https://www.haaretz.com/1.5212045>.

A popular website that addresses halakhic issues suggests that halakhah encourages nonmedical use of stimulants to enhance performance of mitzvot. Responding to whether halakhah obligates those without ADHD to take Ritalin to improve Torah learning, *tefillah*, and the performance of mitzvot, the website ruled that Ritalin is not halakhically required. However, it adds, “Who asks if he has to? Ask when in the morning it is already possible to take the pill.”⁶⁵ Although Ritalin might help one stay up later to learn Torah, this website overlooks the fact that it will not enhance a healthy individual’s learning abilities. In addition, it ignores Ritalin’s dangers and the illegality of the usage, and does not address how to obtain it without an ADHD diagnosis.

Misuse of Adderall to enhance the performance of a mitzvah might be *mitzvah ha-ba b-aveirah*, a mitzvah fulfilled via performance of a sin. Without a diagnosis of ADHD, one can only obtain Adderall by receiving or buying it from someone with a prescription, feigning ADHD to obtain a prescription, or convincing a physician to violate the code of medical ethics and prescribe it for nonmedical purposes.⁶⁶ Illicit Adderall violates the prohibitions of wounding oneself, stealing (if the medication was prescribed for someone else), do not place a stumbling block (misleading the doctor), enabling a friend to sin, and *dina d-malkhuta dina* (the misuse is illegal). *Sukkah* 30a and *Berakhot* 47b teach that a mitzvah performed through the violation of a prohibition is disqualified. Thus, any mitzvah performed under the influence of illicit Adderall lacks halakhic validity. The Lubavitcher Rebbe wrote regarding the dangers of LSD, “The... drug... is not the proper way to attain mystical inspiration. The Jewish way is to go from strength to strength, not by means of drugs and other artificial stimulants.”⁶⁷ Rav Yosef Soloveitchik echoed this sentiment: “People speak about religious experiences today, trying to stimulate religious experiences with drugs... while actually engaging in idolatrous practices. But one cannot get a religious experience—that is, a Jewish religious

⁶⁵ <https://din.org.il/2018/12/07/%D7%97%D7%95%D7%91%D7%94-%D7%9C%D7%A7%D7%97%D7%AA-%D7%A8%D7%99%D7%98%D7%9C%D7%99%D7%9F-%D7%91%D7%A9%D7%91%D7%99%D7%9C-%D7%9C%D7%9C%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%93-%D7%98%D7%95%D7%91-%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA%D7%A8/>

⁶⁶ <https://www.cdc.gov/php/docs/pdpe-requirements.pdf>

⁶⁷ https://www.chabad.org/therebbe/letters/default_cdo/aid/3190865/jewish/Should-I-Take-LSD-to-Attain-Spiritual-Heights.htm

experience—without utilizing the materials of Halakhah.”⁶⁸ Religious encounters achieved through Adderall prescribed for nonmedical purposes are not true religious experiences.

2) Would Halakhah Prohibit Misuse of Adderall Because It Leads to Addiction?

Jewish law prohibits addiction.⁶⁹ In *Pesachim* 113a Rav tells his son, “Do not drink medications.” Rashi explains that drugs are forbidden because they lead to addiction and waste money. Rashbam explains Rav’s statement: “Addiction drives the addict to steal.” Addiction is antithetical to Judaism. Based on *Vayikra* 25:55, “For unto Me the children of Israel are servants,” *Bava Metzria* 10a concludes that “they are My servants, and not servants to servants.” G-d requires Jews to serve Him. They may not be servants to another person or thing. By definition, an addict is a servant to the addictive substance and cannot fulfill this fundamental obligation to serve G-d wholly and completely. For this reason, the Lubavitcher Rebbe prohibited using drugs or “other addictive substances.”⁷⁰

Ḥafetz Ḥayyim banned smoking, sharply criticizing those who became addicted.⁷¹ In *Iggerot Moshe, Hoshen Mishpat*, II: 76, Rav Moshe Feinstein forbade nicotine addiction without prohibiting cigarettes. In *Iggerot Moshe, Yoreh De’ah* III:35, he prohibited recreational marijuana because it leads to addiction. Rav Moshe Tendler, Rav Feinstein’s son-in-law, explaining his father-in-law stated, “To become addicted, Rav Feinstein held, was giving up part of your willpower. To become addicted to anything is a violation of halakhah. It is forbidden to become addicted to any drug.”⁷²

Similarly, Rav Ḥayyim Yosef David Weiss prohibits recreational marijuana because it leads to addiction.⁷³ Is Rivki’s belief that Adderall misuse does not lead to addiction correct?

⁶⁸ *Out of the Whirlwind* (NJ: Ktav for Toras HoRav, 2003), p. 9.

⁶⁹ For a more detailed discussion of how halakhah approaches addiction, see Dr. Sharon Galper Grossman’s article, “It Is Legal and Everyone Is Using: Does Halakhah Permit Recreational Marijuana? Reassessment of Rav Moshe Feinstein’s Teshuvah,” *Hakirab, the Flatbush Journal of Jewish Thought*, vol. 30: 139-161.

⁷⁰ https://www.chabad.org/blogs/blog_cdo/aid/1171699/jewish/The-Problem-With-Drugs.htm.

⁷¹ *Likutei Amorim*, Chapter 13.

⁷² Personal Communication, Rabbi Moshe Tendler, February 10, 2020.

⁷³ קונטרס ובהרת בחיים (וייס, עמ' כ).

In 2013 in the *New York Times*, Dr. DeAnsin Parker writes “drug addicts don’t look like they used to.”⁷⁴ The Drug Enforcement Administration classifies Adderall as a Schedule II substance in the same category as cocaine, due to its highly addictive potential. The FDA explains, “Amphetamines have been extensively abused. Tolerance, extreme psychological dependence, and severe social disability have occurred.”⁷⁵ The US Health and Human Services National Survey on Drug Use reported 558,000 cases of prescription stimulant disorder in 2018.⁷⁶ Adderall addiction is greater among those who use it without a prescription or take it for reasons other than those for which it was prescribed or at higher doses than prescribed.^{77,78,79,80}

Is Adderall more addictive than marijuana or nicotine, substances that *poskim* have forbidden because of their addictive potential? The *Lancet* ranked substances by their addictive potential, putting amphetamines such as Adderall at number eight, following heroin, cocaine, methadone, tobacco, barbiturates, alcohol, and benzodiazepines.^{81,82} Marijuana ranked ten. If *poskim* prohibit recreational marijuana due to its potential for addiction, they would likely rule even more stringently against nonmedical use of Adderall.

3) Does the Nonmedical Use of Prescription Stimulants to “Get One’s Work Done” Misrepresent One’s Abilities and Constitute *Gneivat Da’at* or Cheating?

Cheating is defined as “obtaining or attempting to obtain, or aiding another to obtain credit for work, or improvement in performance by any

⁷⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/03/us/concerns-about-adhd-practices-and-amphetamine-addiction.html>.

⁷⁵ https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/drugsatfda_docs/label/2007/011522s0401bl.pdf.

⁷⁶ <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/reports/rpt29393/2019NSDUHFPRPDFHTML/2019NSDUHFPR090120.htm#sud7>.

⁷⁷ <https://www.addictioncenter.com/stimulants/adderall/><https://drugabuse.com/stimulants/adderall/>.

⁷⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6070393/#R33>.

⁷⁹ <https://www.goodrx.com/adderall/long-term-effects-of-adderall>.

⁸⁰ <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/prescription-stimulants>.

⁸¹ <https://www.rehabspot.com/drugs/10-most-addictive-substances-earth/>.

⁸² David J Nutt, Leslie A King, Lawrence D Phillips, “Drug Harms in the UK: a Multicriteria Decision Analysis,” *The Lancet*, 376: 9752 (2010) p.1558-1565. ISSN 0140-6736, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(10\)61462-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(10)61462-6). (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0140673610614626>).

dishonest or deceptive means.”⁸³ Academic dishonesty would include “the practice of students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in academic assignment or receiving credit for work not their own.”⁸⁴ Illicit use of Adderall as a study drug could qualify as “unauthorized assistance in academic assignments.” College students hotly debate whether using Adderall as a study drug is cheating. Nearly half of the students at an Ivy League college believe it is, while a quarter are unsure.⁸⁵ Among the students who reported misusing prescription stimulants, 70 percent used it to write an essay, 70 percent to study for an exam, and 27 percent to take a test. Students engaged in illicit use were more likely to plagiarize.⁸⁶

At Stern College, 42 percent of the pre-health students stated that taking non-prescribed Adderall to do schoolwork is cheating, although 96 percent think it is wrong because it violates New York state law. Three-quarters of them believe that the college should penalize students for misuse.⁸⁷ Those who view illicit use as cheating point out that Adderall is a performance-enhancing drug similar to anabolic steroids. If athletes may not take drugs to improve their performance in sports, students should not be allowed to take drugs to do better in school. Anabolic steroids give athletes an unfair advantage, allowing them to “cheat” on other players. Similarly, the grades obtained using Adderall illicitly do not reflect natural talent but illegally enhanced abilities, creating an edge over others similarly equipped.

Those who believe illicit use is not cheating reject the comparison with anabolic steroids, claiming that an athlete misusing anabolic steroids at a sporting event is “more of a cheater” than a student misusing Adderall during midterm exams.⁸⁸ They reason that even if one were to take Adderall to prepare for a physics test, one would still need to study. They further argue that illicit use is no different than drinking a cup of coffee,

⁸³ Kaufman, HE., “Moral and Ethical Issues Related to Academic Dishonesty on College Campuses,” *Journal of College & Character*, Volume IX, No. 5, July 2008.

⁸⁴ <https://www.sefaria.org.il/sheets/97572.3?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>.

⁸⁵ Colanari N, John M, Adesman A., “Stimulant Misuse among College Students—Meeting the Challenge,” 2014 May 3; retrieved from http://publichealth.hsc.wvu.edu/media/4254/college_stimulant_misuse.pdf.

⁸⁶ Dubljević V, Sattler S, Racine É., “Cognitive Enhancement and Academic Misconduct: A Study Exploring Their Frequency and Relationship,” *Ethics & Behavior*. 2014;24 (5):408–420.

⁸⁷ <https://yuobserver.org/2017/12/adderall-use-pre-health-students-discuss-open-secret/>.

⁸⁸ Dodge T, Williams KJ, Marzell M, Turrissi R., “Judging Cheaters: Is Substance Misuse Viewed Similarly in the Athletic and Academic Domains?” *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors*. 2012;26 (3):678.

Red Bull, or NoDoz, or hiring a tutor, which many students cannot afford, and costs more than a single dose of Adderall purchased in the library for \$5.00. Others would counter that tutors and caffeinated beverages are legal and do not pose major health risks.⁸⁹ Alternatively, if the concern regarding Adderall use is fairness, academic institutions could make Adderall available to all students.⁹⁰

US Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer called use of Adderall as a study drug “academic doping,” and urged New York universities to halt this practice.⁹¹ Duke and Wesleyan University ban the use of study drugs, viewing their use as cheating.^{92,93} They require all students to sign an honor code stating that they will not participate in cheating.⁹⁴ Students who use “study drugs” face the loss of financial aid and expulsion.⁹⁵ At the University of Mississippi students found in possession of Adderall without a medical prescription must appear before the student conduct department, which can result in loss of financial aid and other major consequences.⁹⁶

Given that students and institutions of higher learning classify study drugs as cheating, how does halakhah approach this behavior?

Rabbi Menashe Klein was asked whether halakhah permits copying answers in college or submitting a friend’s work under one’s name in order to receive a good grade. The individual posing the question suggested two reasons that might justify cheating—copying will free the student from studying, minimizing *bitul Torah*, and a better grade will improve the student’s *parnasah*. Rav Klein answered that such action qualifies as *gneivat da’at*, a theft of mind or misrepresentation. He cites *Shulhan Arukh, Hoshen Mishpat* 228:6-8, which lists various actions that qualify as *gneivat da’at*, even though no one suffers financial loss. Rav Klein distinguishes between a

⁸⁹ <https://lanthorn.com/59230/opinion/using-un-prescribed-adhd-medication-deceitful-and-dangerous/?return>.

⁹⁰ <https://theconversation.com/why-are-we-so-opposed-to-performance-enhancing-drugs-in-sport-46528>.

⁹¹ <https://newyork.cbslocal.com/2013/06/16/sen-schumer-seeks-crackdown-on-academic-doping/>.

⁹² <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/conduct/z-policies/academic-dishonesty>.

⁹³ <https://dailyorange.com/2010/10/beyond-the-hill-drugged-out-wesleyan-university-bans-adderall-on-campus/>.

⁹⁴ It is paradoxical that students and institutions of higher education believe that study drugs qualify as cheating, even though scientific data indicates that they have minimal effect on cognition.

⁹⁵ <https://www.usatoday.com/story/college/2012/01/20/viewpoint-dont-alter-honor-codes-to-include-abuse-of-non-prescription-drugs/37388763/>.

⁹⁶ <https://thedmarchives.com/adderall-possession-could-lead-to-fines-jail-time/>.

student who cheats merely to obtain a diploma and one who cheats to qualify for a profession. The former engages in *gneivat da'at*, while the latter in *gneivat mamon mamash*, actual theft. He points out that an employer who hires a student who cheated might have offered substantially less compensation or refrained from hiring him at all, had he known that the student obtained his grades dishonestly.

Rav Moshe Feinstein was asked whether yeshivot could allow students to steal answers to the NY State Regents exam in order to receive diplomas with honors. He forbade cheating, arguing that it not only violates *dina d-malkhuta dina*, but also constitutes *gneivat da'at* and *gneivat da'at mamash*. Employers want to hire highly qualified candidates who received their diplomas with honors, not people who lied for their grades. Rav Feinstein suggests that even if an employer does not particularly care about the student's academic record, he seeks to hire an honest, law-abiding student. He ruled that it is *assur* to steal even to learn Torah, and that learning for an exam in a secular subject is not *bitul Torah*. One who learns secular subjects without the intention of acquiring knowledge displays *atzlut b'alma*, laziness. In his essay on cheating, Rav Bleich cites the positions of *Mishneh Halakhab* and *Iggerot Moshe* that cheating leads to *gneivat da'at*, and adds that when students or graduates of religious institutions engage in academic dishonesty their actions lead to *hilul HaShem*, desecration of G-d's name.⁹⁷

The student who uses study drugs breaks the law and, where relevant, violates his university's code of ethics. He engages in an additional form of *gneivat da'at*—the misrepresentation of his moral character. The consequences of the *gneivat da'at* that arise from Adderall misuse can be far-reaching. For example, if a physician misuses Adderall and suddenly does not have the drug available, she will not be capable of her usual level of performance, potentially endangering her patients. Yet, in certain work cultures employees routinely misuse Adderall to maintain or increase productivity.^{98,99} In this kind of environment, an employer might tacitly approve of or even favor such an employee and not view Adderall misuse as dishonest, illegal, or an indication of moral failure. Under these circumstances, the principle of *gneivat da'at* might not apply.

Although few *poskim* have ruled on the halakhic permissibility of Adderall misuse or the possibility that it creates *gneivat da'at*, Rav Aryeh Leibowitz and Rav Professor Steinberg have directly addressed this question.

⁹⁷ Bleich JD, *Contemporary Halachic Problems*, vol. II, "Cheating," pp. 109-111.

⁹⁸ <https://www.ft.com/content/2bdb4eac-10f7-11e5-9bf8-00144feabdc0>.

⁹⁹ *Take Your Pills*, a Netflix documentary.

Rav Lebowitz suggests that using Adderall as a study drug in the absence of a diagnosis of ADHD is, at the very least, inappropriate, perhaps “halakhically problematic,” and possibly *gneivat da’at*.¹⁰⁰ As noted, Rav Professor Steinberg believes that halakhah prohibits Adderall misuse due to its inherent dangers. Nevertheless, he points out that “Adderall and other stimulants do not add intelligence points.” Thus, “if one is able to increase his concentration and thus bring out his intellectual potential,” Adderall misuse does not create *gneivat da’at*.

4) Does the Nonmedical Use of Prescription Stimulants Tamper with Who We Are, Interfering with G-d’s Plan?

Jewish law encourages us to maximize our potential, but are there limits?

Although G-d is the master of the universe, Jewish teaching acknowledges that He has granted man mastery of the world. *Psalms* 115:15 states, “The heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth He gave over to man.” G-d has licensed man to apply his intellect, ingenuity, and physical prowess to develop the world. The only limit to this license lies in not violating the Torah or harming others. Thus, the Torah grants a physician license to heal and requires the sick to seek medical care. *Sh”ut Sha’arei Tzedek, Yoreh De’ab* 143 limits the dispensation granted to physicians to heal to treatments with medical purposes. *Tzitz Eliezer* 11:41 prohibits plastic surgery because one who undergoes plastic surgery denies the principle that there is no creator or artist like G-d, who created man in His image, and one may not add or detract from His creations. Doing so essentially declares, “How ugly is the vessel that you created!” Rav Waldenburg views plastic surgery as an attempt to outsmart G-d.

Rav Ovadiah Yosef permits plastic surgery and states that it does not interfere with G-d’s plan.¹⁰¹ Although *Iggerot Moshe, Hoshen Mishpat* 2:66 permits plastic surgery, *Iggerot Moshe, Orach Hayyim* 3:90 prohibits an individual whose illness contra-indicates fasting on Yom Kippur from receiving intravenous fluids to facilitate fasting. He wrote, “The Torah only permitted contradiction of the Divine plan for the purpose of healing an ailing individual.” Rav Feinstein believed that G-d limits the permission to manipulate the Divine plan to interventions that heal the body or the mind.

Rav Moshe Tendler suggests that gene therapy to manipulate a fertilized egg for nonmedical purposes, such as improving intelligence, is not

¹⁰⁰ <http://www.yutorah.org/lectures/lecture.cfm/862581/rabbi-aryeh-lebowitz/from-the-rabbi-s-desk-taking-adderall-before-a-big-exam/>.

¹⁰¹ *Yabi’a Omer, Hoshen Mishpat* 8:12.

permitted because its impact on personality's long-term consequences is unknown. He writes, "If minimal or serious health risks are associated with using this procedure, then halakhah would prohibit gene-editing procedures to change hair color or enhance athleticism without a valid medical or psychologic reason."¹⁰² He does permit, however, gene therapy for a couple with a genetic history of short stature because an abnormally short child is at a disadvantage in society. Under these circumstances, there is a psychological and perhaps even medical benefit to correcting the deformity, rendering gene therapy permissible. Thus, one may tamper with G-d's plan if the intervention is performed for healing, defined broadly to include healing of the mind and body, under the supervision of doctors, because they have been granted a license to modify G-d's plan.

Is Adderall use as a study drug more like plastic surgery, which Rav Feinstein permits, or like inserting an I.V. line for Yom Kippur, which defies G-d's plan? Is it more like gene therapy to improve one's intelligence, which Rav Tendler prohibits because the risks are unknown, or gene therapy to correct short stature, which he permits because it corrects a social disadvantage? Does using Adderall as a study drug suggest that G-d did a less than optimal job of creating one's mental capacity?

Illicit use of Adderall as a study drug has no medical purpose and might be similar to the placement of an I.V. on Yom Kippur. However, if academic pressure leads to *tzar*, and illicit use of Adderall as a study drug could reduce or even heal this distress, one could argue that such use no longer qualifies as tampering with G-d's plan. Illicit use of Adderall bears little resemblance to gene therapy for short stature, which corrects a major disadvantage in society. The typical Adderall misuser is not developmentally delayed or significantly impaired but is an average or slightly below average college student with sufficient mental capacity to have been admitted to college. In addition, Adderall has minimal impact on intelligence; it does not make the user smarter, and its effects are temporary and can only be sustained with daily use.

Alternatively, if everyone in college were to use Adderall as a study drug, those who abstain would be at a distinct disadvantage. One could argue that halakhah might permit this kind of Adderall use as a way to even the playing field and correct an inequality. However, this argument is flawed: students overestimate the prevalence of Adderall misuse; the vast majority of students do not use it regularly. Further, it does not make

¹⁰² <https://hakirah.org/Vol18LoikeTendler.pdf>.

students smarter.¹⁰³ Rav Tendler prohibits gene therapy to improve intelligence because the long-term health risks and the impact of such therapy on personality and behavior are unknown. Although we do not yet know the long-term risks of Adderall use as a study drug, the short-term risks are substantial. Gene therapy, cosmetic surgery, and fertility treatments are all performed by physicians. Those who use Adderall illicitly by definition remove the doctor from the process and act without proper authorization to tamper with G-d's work. Without the doctor, a layman cannot presume to use medicine to contradict the Divine plan. Rav Professor Steinberg writes that Judaism permits man to tamper with creation only under the following conditions: the act of improvement does not violate a halakhic prohibition; the result of this act is not prohibited; the act will benefit man; and the benefits outweigh its risks.¹⁰⁴ Illicit use of Adderall may violate prohibitions such as *gneivat da'at*, and the prohibition against addiction and interferes with the obligation to protect our health. With its minimal impact on intelligence and learning, Adderall's benefits are negligible and do not outweigh the substantial risks.

5) Does Rivki Violate *Dina D-Malkhuta Dina* by Using a Stimulant Prescribed for Someone Else?

Rivki's friend sees taking her son's Adderall to prepare for Shabbat as innocuous. Similarly, Rivki views the use of her friend's Adderall as inconsequential. However, the US Government considers both of these acts to be criminal offenses.

The DEA classifies Adderall as a Class II Substance, along with methamphetamine, cocaine, and oxycodone. Distributing a Schedule II drug such as Adderall is equivalent to delivering heroin, morphine, or oxycodone. Under federal law, possession of a controlled substance with the intent to distribute is punishable by fines and five-year imprisonment.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ DeSantis AD, Hane AC, "Adderall Is Definitely Not a Drug: Justifications for the Illegal Use of ADHD Stimulants," *Subst Use Misuse*.

¹⁰⁴ *Ha-Refuah K-Halakhah*, vol. 1: "Mavo" 3, p. 223.

¹⁰⁵ McCabe SE, Knight JR, et al., "Non-Medical Use of Prescription Stimulants among US College Students: Prevalence and Correlates from a National Survey," *Society for the Study of Addiction* 2005. 99:96-106.

In most states, selling a prescription is a felony. In some states, mere possession of Adderall without a prescription is a felony.¹⁰⁶ In New Jersey,¹⁰⁷ possession of four or fewer Adderall pills without a prescription leads to fines of \$10,000 and 18 months in prison. Storing **prescribed** Adderall in a pocket or any storage other than the original container is a criminal offense.¹⁰⁸

Nedarim 28a, *Gittin* 10b, *Bava Kamma* 113a, and *Bava Batra* 54b and 55a all invoke, in the name of Shmuel, the principle of *dina d-malkhuta dina*—the law of the land is the law—which indicates that halakhah requires us to obey the laws that local governments have enacted. Failure to adhere to federal and state laws that ban illegal possession of Adderall seems to violate this halakhic principle. However, Rama *Shulhan Arukh, Hoshen Mishpat* 369:8 cites Rosh that *dina d-malkhuta dina* applies only to taxes. Rama adds, “There are those who disagree and hold that we apply the principle that the law of the land is the law on all matters.” In *Hoshen Mishpat* 369:11, Rama extends *dina d-malkhuta dina* to every instance that involves *takanat bnei ha-medinah*, the betterment of society. This is the position of *Hatam Sofer, Hoshen Mishpat* 44; Rav Moshe Feinstein, *Iggerot Moshe, HM* 2:62; and Rav Yosef Eliyahu Henkin, *Kitvei Ha-Gaon* 2:96 and *Teshuvot Ivra* 2:175-6. Regulation of possession and use of Adderall qualifies as *l-takanat bnei ha-medinah*—for the betterment of society—protecting public health and preventing substance dependence and abuse. Rav Moshe Ha-Levi Spero points out that although *poskim* disagree about the parameters of *dina d-malkhuta dina*, most believe that the principle includes governmental policies to safeguard the health and welfare of citizens. He emphasizes that “This would certainly include narcotics legislation.”¹⁰⁹ If *dina d-malkhuta dina* applies to narcotics legislation, this halakhic principle would extend to Adderall, a controlled substance, as well. Thus, illegal possession and use of Adderall violate the broad definition of *dina d-malkhuta dina* that most *poskim* espouse.

¹⁰⁶ <https://www.today.com/parenting-guides/what-parents-should-know-about-adderall-campus-t177752>.

¹⁰⁷ <https://schneiderfreibergerlaw.com/criminal-law/drug-charges/adderall-charges-new-jersey/>.

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.therecoveryvillage.com/adderall-addiction/faq/what-happens-getting-caught/>.

¹⁰⁹ Spero MH. “Substance Abuse and Alcoholism” in *Judaism and Psychology: Halakhic Perspectives*.

Does *dina d-malkhuta dina* apply to laws that are not enforced? Illegal possession of Adderall tends to fall into this category.¹¹⁰ Enforcement is challenging because, unlike alcohol where abusers might damage public property, create a public disturbance, or vomit, Adderall misusers could be sitting quietly in the library. Adderall might profoundly damage the brain, but its effects are not readily apparent.¹¹¹ Although some *poskim* maintain that *dina d-malkhuta dina* does not apply when the law is not enforced, others believe that it applies as long as the law is essential to the functioning of society.¹¹² Laws regarding illegal possession and use of Adderall are essential because they prevent widespread abuse and dependence. Further, according to data from the FBI,¹¹³ the sale of Adderall accounted for 4 percent of the nearly 900,000 drug abuse violations in 2020. Possession of these substances accounted for 31 percent of all drug abuse arrests during that year.^{114,115,116} Although the enforcement of laws relating to the use and possession of Adderall can be difficult, enforcement does occur and represents a significant percentage of drug enforcement activities.

Does *dina d-malkhuta dina* apply when obtaining Adderall illegally for the performance of mitzvot? In *Iggerot Moshe, Hoshen Mishpat* 2:29, Rav Feinstein denounces institutions of Torah learning that over-report the number of their students, so as to receive more funding from the US government. He believes that this constitutes *gezzel*, *hilul HaShem*, and *gneivat da'at*, **and** violates *dina d-malkhuta dina*. He writes that G-d has no interest

¹¹⁰ Ole Miss <https://thedarchives.com/adderall-possession-could-lead-to-fines-jail-time/>).

¹¹¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5113141/>.

¹¹² *Poskim* disagree over the application of *dina d-malkhuta dina* to laws that are not enforced. So for example, *Nahalat L-Yisrael*, p. 43, lists several *poskim*, including *Nimukei Yosef*, Ramban (brought by HaRav Hamagid, *Laws of Lending*, Chapter 27), *Rama, Orach Hayyim* 356, Shach, *Lehem Rav* 157, Edut B-Yaakov *siman* 72, *Snei Kerem Shlomo, siman* 31, *Divrei Emet, siman* 12, and *Zere Avraham, Hoshen Mishpat, siman* 8, who rule that *dina d-malkhuta dina* does not apply to laws that the government does not enforce. However, *Nahalat Yisrael* also cites the position of *Shemesh Tzedaka, Hoshen Mishpat* 30b, *Rashba, Helek* 5: *siman* 198, and *Tashbetz, siman* 158, who believe that *dina d-malkhuta dina* even applies to laws that the government does not enforce, as long as they serve as *tikkun klali*, for the general functioning of the government.

¹¹³ <https://crime-data-explorer.app.cloud.gov/pages/explorer/crime/arrest>.

¹¹⁴ <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/topic-pages/offense-definitions>.

¹¹⁵ <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/topic-pages/persons-arrested>.

¹¹⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5113141/>.

in Torah gained from theft. Just as G-d despises stolen sacrifices, G-d abhors supporting Torah through *gezul*. These institutions must teach children to be G-d-fearing Jews, and defrauding the government runs counter to the very values they seek to impart. He warns people not to donate to such institutions so as not to support theft or defiance of governmental laws.

In *Iggerot Moshe*, *Hoshen Mishpat* 2:30, Rav Feinstein rules that stealing in order to learn Torah violates *dina d-malkhuta dina*. This same line of reasoning should apply to Torah learned through illegal acquisition of Adderall. Just as one may not violate *dina d-malkhuta dina* to increase subsidies to Torah institutions, one may also not violate this principle to acquire Adderall illegally, even to increase Torah learning.

How seriously should we take *dina d-malkhuta dina*? *Beit Shmuel*, *Shulhan Arukh*, *Even Ha-Ezer* 28:3 rules that the principle is a rabbinic obligation. However, *Hatam Sofer*, *Yoreh De'ab* 314, *Dvar Avraham* I:II, and *Arnei Miluim* 28:2 argue that it represents a Torah obligation. Rav Ovadiah Yosef in *Yehaveh Da'at* 5:64 cites Rashba, *Nedarim* 28a, concluding that “from the *risbonim* it is evident that they subscribe to Hatam Sofer.” A yeshivah student who obtains Adderall from a classmate or a mother who gets it from her child or neighbor in order to supercharge to cook for Shabbat may be violating a Biblical prohibition.

6) What Other Prohibitions Does One Violate When Feigning ADHD to Obtain a Prescription from a Physician?

Not everyone who misuses Adderall obtains it illicitly from a friend or relative. Many who do not need it get it from a physician by manipulation or trickery. Mothers who use their children’s medication might claim the child lost the prescription or needs a higher dose. Students use the internet to learn the symptoms of ADHD and then feign the illness to obtain Adderall. A Yahoo search for “how do I get my doctor to prescribe Adderall” yielded tens of millions of hits.¹¹⁷ Fifty percent of college students who self-referred for ADHD evaluation were suspected of exaggerating symptoms or dishonestly completing a neurological assessment to receive prescription stimulants.¹¹⁸ Almost 20 percent of individuals without ADHD

¹¹⁷ <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/adderall-rise-mothers/story?id=16622475>.

¹¹⁸ Sullivan, B. K., May, K., Galbally, L., “Symptom Exaggeration by College Adults in Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Learning Disorder Assessments,” *Applied Neuropsychology*, 14, 189-207(2007).

who misused stimulants obtained fraudulent prescriptions from a physician.¹¹⁹ Although one who obtains Adderall legally by manipulating a doctor to prescribe a medication that he does not need might not violate *dina d-malkhuta dina*, he violates the mitzvah of *lifnei iver* by encouraging the physician to sin; breaches the prohibition against lying; and engages in *gneivat da'at* by misleading or by omitting the truth.¹²⁰ G-d hates those who deceive others.¹²¹

He may also be committing *gezel*. *Shulhan Arukh, Hoshen Mishpat* 359:4 states, “Even if one is in mortal danger and must steal from his fellow to save his life, he must only do so with intention of repaying.” Halakhah permits stealing for the purpose of saving a life only if one repays the stolen property. Deliberately deceiving a physician to obtain Adderall for nonmedical purposes is not *pikuah nefesh*. Even if one argues that the individual faces severe psychological distress from the pressures of work and school, academic- and work-related stress should be addressed through healthy coping mechanisms such as diet, exercise, reaching out to family members or mental health professionals, relaxation techniques, and efforts to improve time management.

Taking Adderall when one does not need it drives up insurance premiums, which is a kind of stealing from all of society by forcing people to pay higher premiums. One could argue that the amount that the deceiver has stolen is negligible, so small that it cannot even be measured. In his discussion regarding the obligation of each individual to contribute to herd immunity, Rav Asher Weiss explains that this was the approach of the Noahide generation.¹²² Each individual would steal one apple or one orange of less value than a *prutah*, of such little value that it could hardly be considered *gezel*. However, if every individual did this, the vendor would not be able to survive. Similarly, if a large number of people deceive insurance companies, the companies might not be able to continue to

¹¹⁹ Novak, S. P., Kroutil, L. A., Williams, R. L., Van Brunt, D. L. (2007). “The nonmedical use of prescription ADHD medications: Results from a national Internet panel,” *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*, 2(1), 32.

¹²⁰ Rambam, *Hilkebot De'ot* 2:6; Rambam, *Hilkebot Mekhirah* 18:1; *Sefer Hassidim* 51 *Shulhan Arukh, Hoshen Mishpat* 228:6.

¹²¹ *Pesahim* 113b.

¹²² <https://www.torahbase.org/%D7%90%D7%9D-%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%AA%D7%A8-%D7%9C%D7%94%D7%9E%D7%A0%D7%A2-%D7%9E%D7%97%D7%99%D7%A1%D7%95%D7%9F-%D7%99%D7%9C%D7%93%D7%99%D7%9D-%D7%AA%D7%A9%D7%A2%D7%98/>.

cover the cost of Adderall or other medications, even when they are medically indicated.

7) Does Halakhah Consider Rivki's Neighbor's Physician, Who Prescribes Adderall without Conducting an Evaluation or Monitoring, Liable for His Actions?

Halakhah absolves a physician who prescribed a medication that he deemed appropriate even if it becomes clear that he erred and caused harm or even death.¹²³ However, when the error occurred due to lack of attention, halakhah holds the physician accountable. *Asseh Lekha Rav*, part 3, #30, writes that if a physician made a mistake that his peers might duplicate, he is not culpable, but if his error reflects laziness and other physicians would not make this mistake, he must pay the patient damages. *Be'er Moshe*, part 4, #84:14 explains that when *Hazal* say that a physician is exempt, they refer to a mistake that occurred after thorough investigation. When a rigorous evaluation would have prevented the error, the physician is *hayav makot*, obligated in lashes. *Arukh Ha-Shulhan*, *Yoreh De'ah* 336:2 rules as long as a physician treats within the standard of care, he does not sin, since it is a mitzvah to heal. He sins when *lo eyean yafeh*, he did not perform the appropriate evaluation. In *Tzitz Eliezer*, *Ramat Rabeh*, volume 5, *siman* 23, Rav Waldenburg states that all agree that a physician who rushes to prescribe a medicine and administers a life-threatening medicine instead of a life-saving medicine acts with malice.

Identifying patients with ADHD who will benefit from Adderall is of the utmost importance. Untreated ADHD can cause significant academic, professional, and social harm; individuals with untreated ADHD are twice as likely to develop substance abuse compared to those whose ADHD is treated.^{124,125} Distinguishing between patients who need Adderall and those trying to enhance professional and academic performance is challenging. Twenty percent of the individuals who misuse Adderall obtain a

¹²³ *Ha-Refuah K-halakhah*, vol. 8:4:2:2:12, p.174.

¹²⁴ Wilens TE, Adler LA, Adams J, Sgambati S, Rotrosen J, Sawtelle R, Utzinger L, Fusillo S., "Misuse and Diversion of Stimulants Prescribed for ADHD: A Systematic Review of the Literature," *J Am Acad Child Adolesc Psychiatry*. 2008 Jan;47(1):21-31. doi: 10.1097/chi.0b013e31815a56f1, Review, PubMed PMID:18174822.

¹²⁵ Worcester S., "ADHD Treatment Less Risky than Nontreatment," *Internal Medicine News* [internet] 2006 June [about 1 page]. Available from: http://www.internalmedicineneeds.com/viewpdf.html?file=fileadmin/content_pdf/cpn/archive_pdf/vo134iss6/71503_main.

fraudulent prescription from a physician.¹²⁶ Therefore, when a patient requests Adderall, the physician must obtain a detailed medical history to rule out cardiac disease, assess sleep and diet, identify chronic illnesses like autoimmune disorders or asthma, obtain a medication history, administer behavioral scales to assess for the presence of ADHD, contact a family member to validate the patient's concerns, and perform a thorough physical examination.¹²⁷

Before writing a prescription, the physician should inform the patient that she must take the medication as prescribed and that it is illegal to share it. The doctor must add that if the patient fails to abide by these rules, he will cease to prescribe the medicine. Physicians should schedule follow up appointments to make sure that patients are benefiting from the medication and are tolerating it without developing a tolerance for it. Physicians should look for signs of abuse or misuse, such as requests for early refills, replacing long-acting formulations with short-acting ones, visiting multiple doctors to obtain prescriptions, or obtaining more than one prescription at a time. Thirty-four states require a "physical examination" when prescribing and dispensing a controlled substance. Montana deems "prescribing, dispensing, or furnishing any prescription drug without a prior examination and a medical indication," unprofessional conduct.¹²⁸ Even when employing all available means to evaluate a patient, it is difficult to identify a scammer.

Jewish law would probably hold a physician who writes a prescription for Adderall without formally and comprehensively evaluating the patient accountable for his actions. However, when a physician has thoroughly assessed the patient, diagnosed ADHD, and prescribed Adderall, *poskim* would not hold the physician accountable—even if the patient turns out not to have ADHD and has deceived the doctor in order to obtain Adderall for nonmedical purposes.

What We Can Do to Prevent Adderall Misuse

In the Stern College survey, the vast majority of students believed that the administration should address Adderall misuse; 74 percent of the respondents believed that the administration should penalize students, but

¹²⁶ Novak, S. P., Kroutil, L. A., Williams, R. L., Van Brunt, D. L., "The Nonmedical Use of Prescription ADHD Medications: Results from a National Internet Panel," *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*, 2(1), 32.

¹²⁷ <https://www.aafp.org/afp/2012/0501/p890.html>.

¹²⁸ <https://www.cdc.gov/phlp/docs/pdpe-requirements.pdf>.

29 percent doubted the school could regulate or punish the behavior.¹²⁹ Students suggested that the administration offer educational programs to increase awareness of the “health risks involved.”

Preliminary data suggests that interventions focused on deterring college students’ prescription stimulant use can decrease this activity.¹³⁰ With this in mind, schools and universities could implement interventions to prevent students from starting nonprescription stimulant use. These interventions should target those at greatest risk—Caucasian males, ages 16-19 with low GPAs, members of fraternities, and those with eating disorders. They should help students develop effective study habits and stress management skills, and should encourage the use of mental health resources to address the psychological issues that put students at greater risk for stimulant misuse.

As a community and a society, we should de-emphasize the importance of academic excellence and achieving good grades, encouraging our children to grow in all areas, intellectually, spiritually, religiously, and socially. If our children are struggling, or seem to have difficulty concentrating, we must consult with professionals to determine whether these symptoms reflect an underlying diagnosis of ADHD or another medical condition. Evaluating a student’s study habits is also important. Students who misuse stimulants are more likely to skip class, study less, and struggle with organization. Tutors and educational consultants who teach study skills can address these issues. Students who misuse Adderall often suffer psychological distress and might benefit from counseling. Interventions that help to maximize academic efficiency include avoiding multitasking, spreading out studying to avoid cramming, limiting social media (which

¹²⁹ <https://yuobserver.org/2017/12/adderall-use-pre-health-students-discuss-open-secret/>.

¹³⁰ Only a handful of college campuses offer prescription stimulant prevention programs. After going through a Canadian program, participants were more convinced that prescription stimulant misuse had negative effects and were less likely to misuse. At Miami University, students who request prescription stimulants from student health services must participate in a workshop to improve study skills, time management, and sleep. Students who receive a prescription must also attend a workshop on keeping medications safe and preventing diversion and misuse. There is no data on the efficacy of this intervention. At Syracuse University, the preliminary results of a randomized trial testing a freshmen orientation program that highlighted the dangers of prescription stimulants demonstrated less prescription stimulant misuse among participants (4.3 percent in the intervention vs. 11.4 percent in the control group). https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/SAMHSA_Digital_Download/PEP21-06-01-003.pdf.

can be distracting and anxiety-provoking), ensuring adequate sleep, and adding relaxation strategies such as exercise.

What can be done to decrease Adderall misuse by mothers like Rivki? Many mothers, whether they hold full-time jobs or stay at home, occasionally feel overwhelmed by their many responsibilities.¹³¹ Eighty-four percent of stay-at-home moms do not get a break from parenting after their partner returns from work. When they cannot achieve the impossible, some may turn to Adderall to help them get through the day.¹³² To prevent burnout and desperation to get their work done, hold down a job, run a household, prepare for Shabbat, and be the best parent with the best kids in the nicest house and look beautiful while she does it, we must better manage expectations for ourselves and for society. Women must begin to delegate housework and household responsibilities, stop over-scheduling and over-cleaning, prioritize, learn to say ‘no’ to some demands on their time, make space for themselves, and seek help, if necessary, rather than turning to stimulants.

As gatekeepers who can prevent access to those who fake a diagnosis, physicians have a unique opportunity to prevent stimulant misuse. Twenty percent of all people who misuse Adderall obtain a fraudulent prescription from a physician.¹³³ Since there is no blood test or biomarker that definitively identifies ADHD, accurate diagnosis depends on the sophistication and experience of the doctor and the honesty of patients. Seventy percent of those treated in the emergency department for Adderall misuse obtained the medication from a friend or relative. Yet, 60 percent of physicians do not believe that doing this is common; over half find it difficult to address misuse, or the potential consequences and side effects of drug use with prescription stimulants.¹³⁴ These findings highlight the need to increase physician awareness of misuse by educating them about the potential dangers, legal consequences, and risks of Adderall misuse.¹³⁵ Physicians can adopt preventative practices, such as writ-

¹³¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/meghancasserly/2011/06/15/forbeswoman-thebump-parenting-survey-results/?sh=4cff43e0fbd4>.

¹³² <https://mishpacha.com/stimulating-discussion/>.

¹³³ Novak, S. P., Kroutil, L. A., Williams, R. L., Van Brunt, D. L., “The Nonmedical Use of Prescription ADHD Medications: Results from a National Internet Panel,” *Substance Abuse Treatment, Prevention, and Policy*, 2(1), 32 (2007).

¹³⁴ McCabe SE, Boyd CJ, Couper MP, Crawford S, d’Arcy H., “Mode Effects for Collecting Alcohol and Other Drug Use Data: Web and US Mail,” *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*. 2002; 63(6):755–761.

¹³⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5903919/#R30>.

ten agreements committing patients to specific treatment plans and medication regimens; tracking pill counts; prescribing long-acting stimulants (as immediate release pills have a higher potential for abuse); and referring for treatment those whom they suspect of drug abuse. More physicians must follow the example of Dr. Jacob Freedman, who refused to prescribe Ritalin for Rivki in the absence of a diagnosis of ADHD.¹³⁶

Conclusions

Halakhah prohibits Adderall misuse as it might violate prohibitions against addiction, *gneivat da'at*, and *dina d-malkhuta dina*, interfere with the obligation to protect one's health, and potentially tamper with G-d's plan. Those who trick their physicians into prescribing Adderall in the absence of ADHD might be engaging in *gneivat da'at* and *geze'el*. Physicians who do not properly evaluate a patient seeking Adderall should be liable for their actions. ❧

¹³⁶ <https://www.ama-assn.org/press-center/press-releases/ama-confronts-rise-nootropics>.