

Ethics and Adult ADHD

Description and Importance

Ethical competence is non-negotiable in the evaluation and diagnosis of adult ADHD. This chapter equips clinical psychologists with the ethical frameworks and best practices necessary to conduct responsible, evidence-based, and defensible evaluations. Adult ADHD assessments raise unique concerns, including overdiagnosis, stimulant misuse, and the impact of external support such as academic or workplace accommodations. Clinicians must navigate these challenges with integrity, using a multimethod, objective approach that safeguards against bias and ensures client well-being. Ethical practice demands ongoing education, diagnostic rigor, and clear boundaries—this chapter clarifies how to uphold these values while expanding your practice into adult ADHD assessment.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this chapter, clinicians will be able to:

1. Identify the core ethical principles that apply to adult ADHD evaluations.
2. Describe how to maintain competence through continuing education and evidence-based practice.
3. Apply a multimethod, comprehensive approach to avoid misdiagnosis or overdiagnosis.
4. Recognize and mitigate the ethical risks associated with stimulant misuse and malingering.
5. Discuss societal and policy-level ethical concerns regarding cognitive enhancement and fairness.
