

[IMAGE]

## Nutrition for Autism

By Dr. Jared M. Skowron

Autism is already an epidemic, and what's worse, it's on the rise. The most recent statistics, courtesy of a study published in *Pediatrics*, suggest one out of 91 children are on the autism spectrum, with one in 58 boys affected. That's almost 2 percent of boys. Compare those statistics to 1 in 15,000 children with type 1 diabetes and 1 in 15,000 with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. In short, when it comes to autism, these numbers are staggering, so much so that many of us have or know someone with an autistic child.

It's time to take a stand, because we all need to do something to help before 1 percent or 10 percent (or more) of our children are affected. We need to reverse the process. There are a number of strategies for dealing with autism. There are many beneficial ways to help the nervous system, chiropractic being one of them, along with the behavioral and occupational therapies currently being used. Nutritional supplements cannot be overlooked. There is an imbalance in chemistry inside the bodies of these children. An overactive nervous system burns through nutrients quickly. If they aren't eating healthy in the first place, they have even fewer nutrients available, which only perpetuates the problem. Here are the best nutritional supplements for the autistic child. (Always consult with your doctor before taking any supplement or giving one to your child, particularly if it is intended to help manage an existing health condition.)

### A Specialized All-in-One Supplement

Nutrition for Autism - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark You may feel like a pharmacist when giving all of these supplements, but it's probably the best way to ensure your autistic child gets the nutrients they need. Find combination supplements that include pyridoxal 5 phosphate (P5P), methyl B12, magnesium, zinc, 5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP), theanine, taurine, and trimethylglycine (TMG). It makes things easier. Some of these are amino acids, which are essential to neurotransmitter production, along with a myriad of other body functions. Different children have abnormal values of different amino acids. Magnesium and vitamin B6 have been used for autism the longest, with good effect. They improve social interactions, communication, restricted behavior, and delayed functioning. And vitamin B12 helps neurochemistry and also increases glutathione antioxidant status.

## **Fish Oil**

The brain is made of healthy fats, and some children don't have enough. Each neuron is wrapped in a blanket of fat that helps it conduct electricity, almost like the coating around a wire. What's most important is dose: over 1 gram is essential, 2 grams is better. In a study, autistic children who were given 1.5 g of fish oil demonstrated reduced hyperactivity, tantrums, and aggression compared to autistic children not given fish oil.

## **Digestive Enzymes / Probiotics**

These go hand in hand. A study of 36 autistic children given upper endoscopies (examination of the upper part of the digestive tract) revealed esophagitis, gastritis and duodenitis. Limited carbohydrate enzyme activity was reported in over half of them. The digestive abilities of children with autism are not the best, and many children are also on special diets, which can complicate matters. Enhancing digestion with enzymes and beneficial bacteria can help improve the immune system and hyperactive symptoms.

## **Antioxidants**

Our bodies are in a constant battle to prevent rusting. The brain can rust as well, which worsens symptoms. Inflammation causes oxidation, which destroys the body, even the neurons. Most children with autism have decreased antioxidant levels. Vitamins A, C, and E, zinc, selenium, CoQ<sub>10</sub>, N-acetyl cysteine, glutathione, and others are great ways to nutritionally reverse rusting. They are mainstays of anti-aging therapies, and work for the brain as well.

## **Bowel Movers**

So many children with autism are constipated. Magnesium, mineral oil, and topical castor oil can help move the stool through the bowels.

As any parent knows, when it comes to supplements, the big issue is compliance. Some supplements are less than palatable, particularly for children, and many children have specific tastes. If there's an easy solution, it's to come up with ways to get them to take supplements. Applesauce and yogurt are old standards to sneak supplements into children. You can also try making popsicles or Jell-O cubes in an ice cube tray and dosing the supplements in there. Other parents will buy a syringe from the drug store, because their children are used to taking medicine that way, and pile different liquid supplements in all at once.

The answer for autism is still being discovered, but we're making progress along the way. I wish we could flip a switch and children would instantly be better, but it just doesn't work that way. Try as many things for your child as possible to see what works best, working in conjunction with your doctor. And take videos of your child every month. It's easy for us to forget what last month or last year was like. It's important to see how your child is improving. This is a journey of a thousand steps, but I promise, your child will get better along the way. Remember, talk to your doctor for more information so you can develop the best strategy to help your autistic child.

Nutrition for Autism - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark **What Is Autism?**

- Delay in spoken language
- Repetitive motor habits or language
- Less-than-normal eye contact
- Lack of socialization with peers
- Lack of make-believe play
- Fixation on certain parts of objects
- Problems with sleep
- Hyperacute senses

#### **What Is Autism NOT?**

- It is NOT from bad parenting
- It is NOT a genetic condition
- It is NOT something kids will grow out of
- It is NOT something to be ignored

---

**Jared Skowron, ND**, teaches pediatrics at the University of Bridgeport and is a certified DAN (Defeat Autism Now) doctor. He is the author of *Fundamentals of Naturopathic Pediatrics*. Visit [www.naturopathicanswer.com](http://www.naturopathicanswer.com) to learn more.

Page printed from:

[http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=1295&no\\_paginate=true&no\\_b=true](http://www.toyourhealth.com/mpacms/tyh/article.php?id=1295&no_paginate=true&no_b=true)