

Pure Facts

Newsletter of the Feingold® Associations of the United States



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Newest Study Supports Feingold's Work

Double blind Canadian study shows diet helps 58 percent of preschool hyperactive boys.

P*ediatrics*, the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, has published the results of the latest study on food additives and hyperactivity. The article, "Dietary Replacement in Preschool-Aged Hyperactive Boys", by Bonnie J. Kaplan, Ph.D., et. al. appears in the January, 1989 issue of the journal.

Results

Of the 24 boys, behavioral ratings indicated that 10 of them showed an improvement of 50%, and another 4 were "mild responders", with a behavioral improvement of 12%. The remaining 10 did not show a response. This yields the figures of 42% responding and 16% mildly responding, for a combined figure of 58%.

Study Design

Unlike many of the previous studies this was a "dietary replacement design," where all of the food eaten by the child and his family was supplied by the researchers.

Those studies which involved a "challenge", generally with synthetic dye, produced enormous variations in data and in the interpretation of the data. Unfortunately, they were often interpreted as a test of the Feingold Program, resulting in a great deal of confusion.

The authors note: "The fact that replacement diets (which are broad interventions) result in more of a behavioral change than challenge studies (which focus on individual classes of substances) suggests that individual differences in responsivity of various food sub-

stances are of major importance in this area. It is possible that if we had tested only a single type of substance (e.g., sugar, or dyes) in this same sample, then the usual 0-10% of the children would have exhibited a behavioral response. By testing a broader dietary intervention, we have demonstrated the phenomenon which perhaps should have preceded the various studies of the 1970's: food substances can improve the behavior of 45-60% of these children (depending on the criterion of a response)."



The children in the Canadian study ranged from 3 1/2 to 6 years of age. The decision to limit the subjects to young children was based on the findings of earlier researchers. In the Harley study all ten of the preschool children responded to the Feingold diet. And in the Weiss study the most dramatic responder was very young.

Non-food Considerations

Some effort was made to minimize exposure to irritating substances, such as scented products; and chewable vitamins were free of the prohibited additives. The report did not indicate if any of the children were exposed to other common irritants: colored toothpaste, Play Doh, finger paint, etc.

The Double Blind

The researchers appear to have been successful in preventing the parents from realizing that the focus of the study was food additives. This supports Feingold's conclusions that "placebo effect" or "parental expectations" were not responsible for the improved behavior.

Other design improvements were that none of the children were taking behavior modifying medication, and

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ABSTRACT

A 10-week study was conducted in which all food was provided for the families of 24 hyperactive preschool-aged boys whose parents reported the existence of sleep problems or physical signs and symptoms.

A within-subject crossover design was used, and the study was divided into three periods: a baseline period of 3 weeks, a placebo-control period of 3 weeks, and an experimental diet period of 4 weeks.

The experimental diet was broader than those studied previously in that it eliminated not only artificial colors and flavors but also chocolate, monosodium glutamate, preservatives, caffeine, and any substance that families reported might affect their specific child.

The diet was also low in simple sugars, and it was dairy free if the family reported a history of possible problems with cow's milk.

According to the parental report, more than half of the subjects exhibited a reliable improvement in behavior and negligible placebo effects.

In addition, several nonbehavioral variables tended to improve while the children received the experimental diet, particularly halitosis, night awakenings and latency to sleep onset.

Pediatrics 1989; 83:7-17.

The Feingold® Associations of the United States, Inc., founded in 1976, are non-profit volunteer organizations whose purposes are to support their members in the implementation of the Feingold Program and to generate public awareness of the potential role of foods and synthetic additives in behavior, learning and health problems. The program is based on a diet eliminating synthetic colors, synthetic flavors, and the preservatives BHA, BHT, and TBHQ.

A New Beginning for Scott

We started our son on the Feingold diet after we considered all the alternatives of treatment recommended for his hyperactivity.

My older children, husband and I were preparing for all types of changes in our lives. We soon discovered the changes were not a restrictive life style, but a happier, fuller life for all of us.

Before we began the diet, a day with Scott started at 6:00 am. Breakfast was a battle, always fighting with him to stay at the table and telling him to stop crying. We couldn't say anything to him — he was a real grump.

Dressing Scott was like dressing an octopus, all arms and legs, no cooperation at all.

Taking him shopping was an experience. When crossing streets he wouldn't hold my hand so I would have to hold onto the back of his shirt. He was forever running in front of me, not caring if I was there or not.

Scott stopped taking naps after the age of one year. He didn't know how to play with toys and couldn't sit long enough to learn. He spent most of his time getting into his brother's and sister's things, either destroying them or hiding them under his bed. Then he would deny any knowledge of wrong doing. He was very aggressive towards his siblings and would never say he was sorry.

Bedtime began at 8 pm with us trying to get him to lie down; he would finally fall asleep about 10:30 or 11 pm and our night would begin...

Scott never slept in bed nor used his covers. We would find him under his bed, in the living room, hallway, family room, lights on, TV on. He never slept all night either; the most he would sleep at one time was 3 hours. Then he would be up for about 2 hours before falling asleep again.

As I look back I don't know how we put up with this behavior as long as we did without seeking help.

After about one and a half weeks into the diet our Scott was sleeping all night, going to bed at 8:30 to 9 pm and sleeping until 7:00 or 7:30 am. He started using his covers for the first time. He sat through all of his meals and even smiled in the morning.

Dressing him no longer requires being a pro wrestler. He enjoys looking nice and being clean.

When I take Scott shopping he *walks* with me, always keeping me in view! Now I sometimes have to tell him to hurry up, because I'm in front of him! He now holds my hand when we cross streets.

He stays out of his brother's and sister's things, and does not deny it if he is caught doing something wrong. Scott tells the truth about the situation; he even says he's sorry and means it.



Scott Geiszler

Our son now sings songs to us that he's learning in pre-school — what a lovely thing to hear.

We are an active family with many obligations which take us in every direction. We are not health nuts but we do now care about what we eat, and most of all we care about what the ingredients are.

The diet is not hard. If I focus on eating healthy and selecting the brands recommended, staying with the real thing (like butter instead of margarine), using fresh foods, avoiding mixes and prepared foods I have no problem staying on the right track.

I think Scott feels better than he ever has. What a difference this diet has made in his behavior and our family life together.

*Shelley Geiszler
Albany, Oregon*

Editor's note: Scott, age 4, would love to meet other "Feingold kids" in his area.

Letter From Holland

Dear FAUS,

Last year I started to make contact with newspapers about the subject of food-additive intolerance and the effects of additives and salicylates on some children.

The newspapers were very cooperative and since then a lot of articles were written about the subject. In December 1987 I was invited to a current events programme to talk about my experience with additives and the effects of them on children.

It's very hard to describe the reactions after that television broadcast. None of us could have foreseen the amount of reactions afterwards.

Most of the reactions were very personal and emotional. We sent out thousands of packets of information.

Every province got its own contact person with their own consulting hours.

Many physicians, dietitians and people who work with hyperactive children wanted more information about the subject.

From the beginning it was clear to me that we had to unite ourselves. We decided to start our own association, which became official in June of 1988. The name of this association is B.A.S. (benzoic, azo-dyes and salicylates).

We already have 400 members and the first newsletter appeared in July.

I want to thank you for all the information you have sent.

With kind regards,

*Marianne Hollmann
Heemstede, the Netherlands*

I Want to Help...

Here's How

Articles on the use of the drug Ritalin for hyperactivity are showing up in newspapers throughout the United States. But the alternative of diet management is often not even mentioned.

A letter to the editor of your local paper will alert readers to the help available from the Feingold Association. Or, if you don't have time, send the article to FAUS and we'll write a letter.

Please include the name of the newspaper and the date the article was published.

Headaches

In a study involving 26 patients with recurrent headaches, doctors at the Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney, Australia found that all but 4 were significantly helped by a change in diet.

The diet eliminated: monosodium glutamate, amines, tartrazine (this is the food dye Yellow No. 5), preservatives, yeasts, nitrites/nitrates and salicylate.

"After following the diet for two to six weeks, the 22 responders noted a 50 percent reduction in headache frequency and severity. Subsequent double-blind challenges were positive for at least one of the chemicals in 18 of the patients. Reactions were observed with: monosodium glutamate, yeasts, nitrites/nitrates, preservatives and tartrazine." (*American Family Physician*, journal of the American Academy of Family Physicians.)

Tracking Down a Reaction

Jacob had been doing so well on the diet, and suddenly things started falling apart.

Feingold mom, Sherry Lebowitz described her son's success in last year's May issue of *Pure Facts*, but now something had gone wrong.

He would be fine at home but his behavior deteriorated after he arrived at school. Sherry checked the school for a possible cause: teacher's perfume? newly painted rooms? fumes from glues, solvents, or cleaning supplies? new carpeting or flooring adhesive? Nothing seemed to fit.

When she took her car in to the garage for maintenance, the mechanic told her the muffler had a hole in it. Something clicked in Sherry's mind. A friend had become very sick from driving a car where a faulty exhaust system allowed fumes to leak into the car.

Once the muffler was repaired, Sherry reports, Jacob's behavior returned to normal. A mere five minute drive to school each morning, with exposure to exhaust fumes, was enough to affect this very sensitive child. Both the car and Jacob are doing well once again.

Truth in Labeling

Feingold members have long called for accurate labeling which would provide information about all of the synthetic additives hidden in foods. While we are still a long way from this goal, it is good news to learn that major companies are expressing an interest in better labels.

According to the *Washington Post* (12/28/88), leading juice manufacturers are now calling for full disclosure labeling of fruit and vegetable beverages. Ocean Spray Cranberries, Inc., Campbell Soup Co., General Foods Corp., and Del Monte USA are among the companies pushing for requirements that fruit drinks list the percentage of juice contained and complete nutrition information.

At present only orange juice beverages must list the percentage of juice they contain. The idea to provide this labeling on all juice beverages has been languishing for almost 15 years, in part because of pressure from cranberry drink producers.

Cranberry juice is so high in acid that it must be diluted with water to be palatable; cranberry drink manufacturers were concerned that labels showing the lower percentage of juice might not be well accepted by consumers.

But Ocean Spray now favors full nutrition labeling and the coalition of juice manufacturers are petitioning the Food and Drug Administration to amend its regulations.

Consumer Group Monitors New Additives

"Chemical companies are unleashing a host of novel food additives: artificial sweeteners, new fiber compounds, fake fats", notes Center for Science in the Public Interest.

"They say these newly created chemicals offer exciting new possibilities for healthful, processed foods. And maybe they do. But let's not rush headlong into uncharted areas without adequate testing and monitoring of the new additives.

"Will these chemicals lead to foods that fill us up but leave us malnourished? Will combinations of them produce some new health problem? We demand answers before letting the food industry market these new chem-lab concoctions to the American public.

"We plan to carry out a special campaign to monitor the new additives. And we will protest when the FDA approves poorly tested and possibly dangerous additives, as it has done with the new artificial sweetener, acesulfame-K, and may do with olestra, the fake fat.

"We're also going to make 1989 the "Year of the Food Label." It's high time we got nutrition and ingredient information on all foods — in a way that's understandable to someone who doesn't have a Ph.D. in nutrition!"

Bad News on Sulfites

When the Food and Drug Administration finally banned the use of sulfites in fresh vegetables and fruits in 1986, salad bar aficionados (not to mention some one million sulfite-sensitive people) rejoiced. Could wines, potatoes and dried fruits be far behind? Apparently, yes.

Internal FDA documents obtained by CSPI reveal that the agency does not intend to extend the ban to these and other products. Instead, it is proposing a rule to set maximum allowable levels that would be "consistent with current good manufacturing practices...."

In other words, the FDA plans to allow food manufacturers to use only as much sulfites as they're using.

Meanwhile over at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms, a 1984 proposal to cut sulfite limits in wine by up to 20% is languishing on some bureaucrat's desk.

Nutrition Action Health Letter
December, 1988

The Feingold® Associations do not endorse, approve or assume responsibility for any product, brand, method or treatment. The presence (or absence) of a product on a Feingold foodlist, or the discussion of a method or treatment does not constitute approval (or disapproval). The foodlists are based primarily upon information supplied by manufacturers, and are not based upon independent testing.

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some allowance in the ratings was made when it was known that there had been an infraction.

Behavioral Ratings

Another improvement in the design of the Canadian study was that parents rated their children's behavior on a daily basis, rather than once-weekly. Parents also observed their child for the presence or absence of nine physical symptoms: skin rashes, red cheeks, dry skin, stomach bloat or cramps, leg cramps, stuffy/runny nose, headaches, ear aches, and bad breath.

The major physical improvement noted by parents was the child's breath (halitosis). There was also a lessening of sleep disturbances (difficulty in getting to sleep and frequency of awakening).

Funding

Funding was provided by national and provincial agencies. Unlike some of the studies carried out in the U.S., there was no involvement of food/chemical industry lobbies in the design, funding or implementation of the study.

Nutrition

Nutritional data collected during the study did not show a correlation between an improvement in nutrition leading to improved behavior.

Conclusion

The authors conclude: "Our research provides some clues as to where further work should proceed (i.e., the examination of the physical basis of adverse reactions...) and it also demonstrates a larger potential impact of diet than perviously reported. These results suggest that pediatricians and other practitioners might consider dietary modifications worth trying, particularly in younger children."

Pure Facts



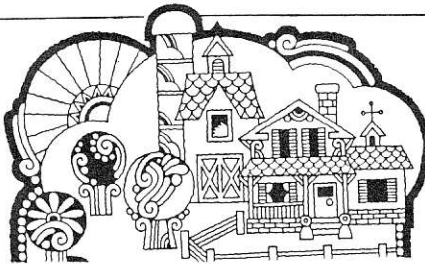
Pure Facts is published ten times a year and is provided to members of the Feingold Association.

For further information write to: Feingold Association of the United States, Inc., P.O. Box 6550, Alexandria, VA 22306 (703) 768-FAUS.

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Editorial Comment

The Kaplan study appears to come closest to a study of the Feingold Program. An important difference, however, is that for all but 4 of the children, natural salicylates were not removed. Feingold members have found the initial elimination of natural salicylates is often a critical factor in the diet's success.



Pesticides

Many Feingold members are concerned about the use of pesticides. These potent chemicals can be found not only in most of the foods we eat, but end up in our water supply.

While pesticides are not a primary concern on the Program, members generally wash, and often peel fruits and vegetables to remove some pesticide residue.

Several consumer groups are fighting to make our food healthier, including: U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG), 215 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC 20003 and Center For Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), 1501 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. CSPI has compiled a list of organic food mail-order suppliers, and will provide it at no charge. Send a long, self addressed envelope with 50 cents in stamps, along with your request.

Organic Agriculture

A national conference on organic/sustainable agriculture will be held in Washington, DC March 16 and 17th. (The terms "sustainable" and "low in-put" refer to farming practices which use as few synthetic chemicals as possible.) It is being sponsored by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), the Texas Department of Agriculture, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, and the Institute for Alternative Agriculture.

For many years farming techniques have depended heavily on synthetic chemicals, but organic farming is gradually gaining in acceptance, both among policy makers and the farmers themselves.

Pesticides raise many concerns in addition to the health effects of eating treated food. Farmers and farm workers are at risk, as is the environment, including wildlife and our water supply.

Congress and some states have funded research into low-chemical farming, according to CSPI Director Michael Jacobson, "but major obstacles are still blocking more widespread adoption of low-input farming practices. The National Conference will bring together farmers, consumers, policymakers, and food retailers to discuss ways to remove barriers to organic farming and sustainable agriculture."

Once found only in a small number of health food stores, foods grown without pesticides are becoming increasingly attractive to the average consumer. In the supermarket industry where competition is intense, a potential marketing advantage such as pesticide-free food is likely to be given serious consideration.

One of the problems with the marketing of organic foods is finding a way to ensure that the product has actually been grown without the unwanted chemicals. The Conference will feature the Texas Department of Agriculture's innovative program to certify organic farms and promote Texas products carrying the "TDA Certified Organic" label.

FAUS 14th Annual Conference

If your plans take you near Chicago this summer, be sure to include the FAUS Annual Conference on your itinerary. We will be meeting in the suburban city of Wheaton on June 22-24, 1989. The Conference is open to all members.