



Solving Attention Deficit Disorder Naturally

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Attention deficit disorder (ADD) and Attention deficit disorder with hyperactivity (ADHD) are medical terms to describe a combination of symptoms associated with the central nervous system. Symptoms range from an inability to pay attention and focus, to behavioral problems and inability to rest and sleep. The list of symptoms is long, but they all have one thing in common: an over-stimulated, and out of balance nervous system. Medically the solution is a group of drugs such as Ritalin, Dexedrine, and Adderall, all which control the symptoms, but do little to nothing to correct the cause. Long term use of these drugs is very questionable, and perceivably very dangerous.

From a natural standpoint, a symptom is the body's way of telling you something is wrong. The solution is to find the cause of the imbalance, or irritation, and correct it, thereby giving the body the opportunity to reverse the symptoms on its own. Many of you have tried natural supplements for these disorders but have been unsuccessful at getting the results needed. Before you give up on the idea, let me say that this is a complicated situation involving multiple imbalances and causes. It may take some serious effort and time, on your part, to put together the appropriate program for your child, or yourself. Below I will attempt to simplify the process by outlining some of the major contributing factors to the onset of ADD and ADHD and their nutritional relationships to the nervous system. I shall also outline a supplement program, which may be tried as a starting point, which we have found from experience to be the most successful.

Nutritional Factors in ADD and ADHD

Blood Sugar Imbalances – There are many symptoms associated with low blood sugar such as craving sweets and carbohydrates, irritability if a meal is late, afternoon fatigue, occasional vision blurs, and weight gain. Psychologically, low blood sugar also can cause depression, anxiety, mood swings, confusion, incoherent speech, and bizarre behavior. How many children do you know that start their day with bowl of sugary cereal, juice, pancakes with syrup, sweet rolls, etc? Along with drinking several sugary drinks and soda pops thru out the day? The second contributing factor in low blood sugar is the lack of protein with their meals. Protein provides amino acids that are critical for brain function particularly involving concentration, and irritability. Children need to start their day with a low sugar, high protein breakfast to maintain normal blood sugar levels and concentration levels thru out the day. Eggs and whole grain toast, a cold sandwich, natural protein drinks or breakfast bars are good choices.

Learn to read labels as foods that are labeled as “healthy” are often misleading.

Basic guide for labels on cereals and breakfast bars:

Carbohydrates around 25 grams

Fiber 4-8 grams

Protein 6-10 grams

Fats 3 grams

Look for mixed grains, instead of all wheat.

Cereals: look for the brands Back to Nature, Nature’s Path, or Ezekiel, they carry them at Ingles. These cereals have good flavors, and a good combination of protein, carbs, and fiber.

Breakfast Bars can be used as an alternative to cereals, or a half bar as a mid-day snack. Bars need to be balanced properly also, the following brands are balanced well.

Good choices are: Luna Bars, Power Bar Nut Naturals, or Power Bar Harvest whole grain, Zone Bars, Balance Bars

Note: Watch out for the low fat yogurt drinks or some of the other brands as they may contain Splenda or sucralose, this and other artificial sweeteners should not be consumed on a regular basis (though I prefer not at all).

Food Sensitivities - When food is eaten it is broken down by the digestive tract so it can be assimilated into the blood stream and used to build the body. When children are under stress, eat quickly, and tend to be emotional, they tend not to digest their food properly or completely. This creates food allergies or sensitivities Common symptoms that food is not being digested properly are constipation or diarrhea, dark circles under the eyes, hives, rashes, skin disorders, stomachaches, gas, sinus congestion, irritability, anger, mood swings, depression, headaches, hyperactivity, and learning problems. Note: If your child suffers from frequent gas, bloating, indigestion, or constipation it is likely that he or she is having some food sensitivities. Work with your Natural Health Consultant to learn more about how to determine what foods may be a problem. Consider supporting digestion with enzymes while working on diet changes or other possible causes to the problem. **Proactazyme plus**, or **Chewable Papaya mints** are natural food enzymes that can be added to a meal to improve digestion of the food.

Toxins in the Environment and Foods - Along with the problem of improperly digested foods comes the problem of food colorings and additives that create reactions in the brain and overload the liver. Again we think of the many cereals, drinks, and snacks that children consume that are loaded with artificial colors and flavors. On top of that the liver is further overloaded by excessive toxins in the environment such as cleaning chemicals in the schools and home, cigarette smoke, pollution, and pollens, molds, and other allergens in the air. Typically most children consume very little fiber and drink very little water; both these factors further enhance the build up of toxins in their systems and further weaken the eliminative organs of the body (liver, lungs, skin and kidneys). An overloaded liver creates symptoms such as mood swings, irritability and anger, difficulty falling asleep followed by difficulty waking in the morning, muscle aches, headaches, and skin problems.

* It is very important that children consume 4-6 glasses of water daily. If your child has been exposed to a lot of toxins, such as cigarette smoke, new house fumes, molds, or cleaning chemicals it may be necessary to support liver cleansing. The formula **Herbal Trace Minerals** provides alfalfa, kelp, and dandelion which are all helpful for improving kidney and liver function. This formula also provides a wide range of trace minerals to help improve energy as well. **Enviro-Detox** is a good choice if the child also suffers from constipation and sinus congestion.

Yeast Build-Up - Perhaps you have heard the term Candida, referring to yeast like fungi which normally lives in the digestive tract. The overgrowth of this yeast often occurs when the diet is high in sugar, low in fiber, coupled with poor digestion and assimilation of foods and a history of the frequent use of antibiotics. In this situation the population of “good” friendly bacteria are destroyed, while “bad” unfriendly bacteria multiply and take over the digestive tract. This results in many symptoms, a few of the most common include: fatigue, poor memory, feeling of “spaciness“, depression, constipation, diarrhea, intestinal gas and bloating, reoccurring vaginal or bladder infections, and muscle aches and weakness. **Yeast/Fungal Detox** or **Silver Shield** may be needed in severe cases of yeast.

If your child has a history of antibiotic use, it is likely that he suffers from some amount of yeast overgrowth. This can intensify symptoms of craving sweets, as well as the other symptoms mentioned in the paragraph above on that subject. It is recommended that you supplement the child with a **pro-biotic** product like **L-reuteri** to build up the good bacteria levels and weaken the yeast population.

Nutritional Deficiencies – when ever the body is out of balance, ill, or not functioning at it’s best there will be nutritional deficiencies involved. A few nutritional substances are particularly important to support with ADD and ADHD, so I will cover them below:

Essential Fatty Acids (EFA) contained in Flaxseed oil - A diet composed of largely saturated fat, animal fatty acids, cholesterol, and trans-fatty acids like margarine, provides negative fatty acids that disrupt the cell membrane. We need a diet that supplies the essential fatty acids Omega 3 and Omega 6, which cannot be manufactured by the body but must be supplied by the diet. These good fatty acids are concentrated in a few tissues in the body but in particular the brain. They help to control what enters the cell as well as the exiting of waste products from the cell. A lack of these good fatty acids has a dramatic impact on moods, behavior, and mental function. A small deficiency of these fatty acids can cause impaired ability to learn and recall information. Foods that are high in essential fatty acids include salmon, mackerel, herring, raw almonds, and sunflower seeds, flaxseed oil, black current and evening primrose oils. Since very few children and adults consume these foods regularly in their diet it is easy to see how deficiencies result. Other symptoms of lack of EFA include dry skin, eczema, psoriasis, and inflammatory disorders like arthritis, hair loss, and irritability. Note: Flaxseed oil is the most recommended oil for ADD and ADHD, it can be mixed in a protein drink, or fruit smoothie, and is well tolerated by children in that way. Good quality protein drinks can be found at your health food store. Flaxseed oil needs to stay refrigerated. Flaxseed oil is available in capsules but they are rather large and some children may object to swallowing them. **Flaxseed oil liquid # 3162-1**

B Complex - Crucial for the function of your brain and nervous system. The B-vitamins help with proper mental function, memory, and moods. They are also involved in keeping your blood sugar levels stable, and your ability to handle stressful situations. Since both stress and sugar intake depletes B-vitamins you can see why children need this vitamin to be supported. When B-vitamin levels are low people tend to be “wound up”, with excess energy that drops when they finally stop moving at the end of the day. They tend to always have something in motion such as tapping fingers or feet whenever they are sitting, they may also tend to be excessive worriers. The B-complex vitamins are available in the multiple vitamins suggested below. Some of the older children if they are particularly stressed, or wound up, may require additional B-complex capsules. **Children’s Chewable Multiple # 1593-0**, or for older children who can swallow tablets the **Multiple Vitamin Time Released #1619-5**.

Calcium/Magnesium - These two minerals are very valuable to the proper function of the nervous and structural systems. The lack of calcium and magnesium will cause nervous tension, irritability, an inability to sleep soundly, muscle cramps, jumpy leg syndrome, achy bones, clenching of the teeth, constipation, and bladder spasms- resulting in bed wetting, and a lowered immune system.

Calcium/magnesium supplement in tablets – best for older children (#1675-0).

For younger children I like the **Liquid Stress-J formula** (#3163-3) which is an herbal blend that provides naturally occurring calcium and magnesium. I also like **Herbal CA ATC** (#826-3)

This blend of herbs is high in calcium and magnesium, is calming to the nervous system and supports urinary health. I have found this formula to be very helpful for children who wet the bed at night or have a hard time falling asleep. I give our boys ages 10 and 13, 1 capsule per day at bedtime as their natural calcium–magnesium source.

Colloidal Minerals –Trace minerals are much depleted from today’s food supply. These important minerals help meet your body's need for active enzyme systems, chemical balance, as well as the maintenance and repair of all body systems. I feel children are particularly depleted of these important trace minerals and that this is a contributor to ADD and ADHD. The NSP Colloidal Minerals is made with the finest particle-size colloids that are ready for assimilation into the body, providing enhanced mineral supplementation in an economical, great-tasting lemon-lime flavor. These minerals come from ancient plant deposits--a balance of minerals produced by nature. It contains a full spectrum of macro and trace minerals, many of which are required for daily cell function and structure. pH balanced for maximum benefit. May be mixed with juice or water, **refrigerate after opening.** (#4013-6)

Focus Attention Formula – This formula combines powerful nutrients required for quiet, balanced mental activity. It helps modulate brain activity and energy levels without harsh chemicals and supports blood circulation and neurotransmitters in the brain. Focus Attention can also protect the body from undesirable effects caused by exposure to chemicals, food additives and pesticides. By supporting the body with a wide range of high-quality nutrients, balance and function may be maintained, while learning and memory are enhanced.

Focus Attention contains Melissa officinalis to soothe the nervous system, Ginkgo biloba to support brain and circulatory health, DMAE for memory and learning enhancement, slippery elm to aid nutrient absorption, l-glutamine to support healthy brain activity and mental ability, and grape seed extract to neutralize brain cell-damaging free radicals. (#1833-4 capsules, #1843-0 powder)

Special Note:

Some children diagnosed with ADD and ADHD are actually just suffering from an over stimulated nervous system which does not have enough nutrients to correct and balance itself. These children respond very well and very quickly to the above program. True cases of ADD or ADHD have an imbalance of the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems. Those with an imbalance of excess in the sympathetic nervous system will tend to have very large pupils all of the time. They will also respond well to the above program. Children with an imbalance of excess in the parasympathetic nervous system react differently and you will find they may be stimulated by herbal formulas that tend to relax the body such as Stress-J or Herbal CA or calcium. These children tend to have very small pupils all of the time. Herbs that stimulate a tired or sluggish person will often help quiet this type of child down. My favorite formula in this situation is **Energ-V (#875-8).**

Energ-V was designed to support the body’s own energy-building system. It works with the glandular, nervous and circulatory systems to help relieve stress and support energy production. It provides a variety of nutrients to support vitality—some that nourish the glands (kelp and licorice) and some that nourish the brain and nervous system (gotu kola), better enabling the body to cope with stress. Energ-V also provides support from adaptogenic herbs (schizandra and eleuthero) that help the body under environmental stress. For children with a

dominant parasympathetic nervous system this formula can have a quieting effect which helps them to focus and control their energy. (#875-8).

GABA is supplement that helps to balance excessive brain activity. When a child or adult finds they can't turn off the brain especially at night, they are often GABA deficient. GABA is an amino acid that is used to make a neurotransmitter (brain chemical) that calms excessive brain activity and promotes a state of greater relaxation and peace. Excessive daily stress quickly depletes the needed ingredients to make this chemical. The resulting low GABA levels will cause your mind to run fast all the time and make you feel irritable, easily angered, and short tempered. Consult your Natural Health consultant about the use of this supplement. Do not take if you are on any anti-depressant drugs. (#1823-6)

Question: What if my child is on prescribed medications for ADD or ADHD, can I still use this program?

Answer: This program is designed to be used along side the medications your doctor may prescribe for ADD and ADHD. These are basic nutritional supplements that do not have strong medicinal properties; therefore they will not interfere with the function of the medications. However, it is important for you to talk with your doctor about your desire to blend in nutritional supplements with his current medication program. Many of the symptoms of ADD and ADHD are actually brought on by simple nutritional deficiencies and poor diet. Knowing this, it can be expected that after improving the diet and using supplements for several weeks, that you would see a change in the child's behavior and focus. This may cause the child to need less medication. Talk with your Doctor about this program and your desire to try it with your child. Keep your Doctor informed of the child's progress so he or she can reduce the medication dose, in a safe and gradual manner as the child's nutrition improves.

I sincerely hope this information helps you to be educated to use these tools, to help your child become emotionally and mentally balanced and happy!

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