

FOOD INTOLERANCE NETWORK FACTSHEET

Introduction to food intolerance

Our food has changed drastically over the last 30 years, and so have food-related problems.

Additives are now used in healthy foods such as bread, butter, yoghurt, juice or muesli bars as well as in junk food. Reactions to food additives are related to dose, so the more you eat, the more likely you are to be affected. A British survey in 2007 found that:

- most consumers underestimate how many additives they eat
- the average consumer eats 20 additives per day (19 if foods are home-cooked)
- most consumers don't know which foods contain additives.

Effects of food additives can include

- irritability, restlessness, difficulty falling asleep
- mood swings, anxiety, depression, panic attacks
- inattention, difficulty concentrating or debilitating fatigue
- speech delay, learning difficulties
- eczema, urticaria and other itchy skin rashes; angioedema or swelling of the lips etc often associated with rashes
- reflux, colic, stomach aches, bloating, and other irritable bowel symptoms including constipation and/or diarrhoea, sneaky poos, sticky poos, bedwetting
- headaches or migraines
- frequent colds, flu, bronchitis, tonsillitis, sinusitis; stuffy or runny nose, constant throat clearing, cough or asthma
- joint pain, arthritis, heart palpitations, racing heartbeat
- and see more at the bottom of www.fedup.com.au

Natural food chemicals

Some natural chemicals called salicylates can cause the same problems as additives if consumed in large doses or by sensitive people. For problems serious enough to see a doctor, or conditions with a diagnosis such as ADHD, eczema etc it is best to find out more about salicylates, as well as other natural food chemicals called amines and glutamates.

These natural food chemicals are increasing in our food supply, due to increased availability of out-of-season fruit and vegetables, concentrated natural chemicals in processed foods, and added flavours. Foods high in salicylates include strawberries, kiwifruit, avocados, sultanas and other dried fruits, citrus, pineapple, broccoli, pizza toppings, tomato sauce, olive oil and tea. Cheese and chocolate are particularly high in amines. Salicylate sensitivity can be triggered or worsened by medications such as aspirin and other NSAIDs (non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) such as Nurofen and lotions e.g. anti-arthritis, salicylate-containing teething gel.

People rarely realise that they are affected by salicylates or amines unless they eat a very large dose in a short time (e.g. salicylates at Christmas or amines at Easter) or until they reduce their intake. This is because these food chemicals are eaten so frequently that the effects fluctuate and can build up very slowly. One mother wrote:

'I cut back my five-year-old daughter's intake of fruit to about a quarter of what she normally had. Within days we saw dramatic changes. Her behaviour evened out ... she was more sensible and obliging, less aggressive and defiant - and altogether much more pleasant to live with.'

Flavours and fragrances such as fruit or mint (e.g. in toothpaste) are another source of salicylates. Since the 1970s, increasingly large doses have been added to products. In the UK, recent studies of new mothers found more headaches and depression in mothers and more asthma, diarrhoea, vomiting and ear infections in babies with increasing use of air fresheners and/or aerosols.

A smaller number of people are sensitive to dairy foods and/or wheat or gluten.

A dietitian can supervise a three week trial of the RPAH (Royal Prince Alfred Hospital) elimination diet which is free of additives and low in salicylates and amines to find out exactly which food chemicals are contributing to problems. In our experience, this is the most effective elimination diet in the world.

Some additives that can cause problems

ARTIFICIAL COLOURS (in sweets, drinks, takeaways, cereals and many processed foods)
102 tartrazine, 104 quinoline yellow, 110 sunset yellow, 122 azorubine, 123 amaranth, 124 ponceau red, 127 erythrosine, 129 allura red, 132 indigotine, 133 brilliant blue, 142 green S, 143 fast green FCF, 151 brilliant black, 155 chocolate brown

NATURAL COLOUR 160b annatto (in yoghurts, icecreams, popcorn etc, 160a is a safe alternative)

PRESERVATIVES

200-203 sorbates (in margarine, dips, cakes, fruit products)
210-213 benzoates (in juices, soft drinks, cordials, syrups, medications)
220-228 sulphites (in dried fruit, fruit drinks, sausages, and many others)
280-283 propionates (in bread, crumpets, bakery products)
249-252 nitrates, nitrites (in processed meats like ham)

SYNTHETIC ANTIOXIDANTS (in margarines, vegetable oils, fried foods, snacks, biscuits etc)

310-312 Gallates
319-320 TBHQ, BHA, BHT (306-309 are safe alternatives)

FLAVOUR ENHANCERS (in tasty foods)

621 MSG
627, 631, 635 disodium inosinate, disodium guanylate, ribonucleotides

For more information

- The revised edition of **Fed Up** (2008) by Sue Dengate is now in bookstores.
- The **Failsafe Cookbook** (2007) by Sue Dengate from your bookstore or library. It's not just a recipe book - there's heaps of information about food intolerance as well, and a step by step guide about how to do the elimination diet.
- The DVD **Fed Up with Children's Behaviour** is available through the website. This is what one man wrote:

'I've watched your fantastic DVD three times since receiving it. It has made me go back to the drawing board, I think I missed salicylates earlier. You might want to reconsider the title "Fed up with Childrens behaviour", it is not just about children I feel, and it is not just about behaviour either. It goes much further. Many people who are not concerned about children's behaviour could still benefit in a big way from the DVD. Perhaps consider "Your Food, Your Health, Your Relationships & Your wellbeing: YOUR LIFE!!!" or something similar. Although the focus in this DVD was on children, but many a time adults are shown to benefit as well.'
- Write for our list of supportive dietitians confoodnet@ozemail.com.au - if you say where you live, we may be able to recommend someone special. Most people only need one or two visits to a dietitian plus some phone or email backup. Dietitians say it cuts an hour off consultation time needed if people have read Fed Up before they go.
- Friendly Food by researchers from the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Allergy Unit, available from libraries, bookstores and <http://www.cs.nsw.gov.au/rpa/Allergy/default.htm>. Firnelly Food contains excellent colour-coded salicylate and amine charts, but in our experience, very few families succeed with Friendly Food alone. One failsafer wrote: 'Thank you for writing your fantastic "Failsafe Cookbook". We have been using it for a while and have recently gotten "Friendly Foods" as well and as good as it is for a lot of stuff, I'm SO grateful for the simple, family friendly recipes in your book.
- our email newsletters and support groups provide useful support, local shopping lists and answers to questions

For example, email with "subscribe" in the subject line to:

Newsletter - failsafe_newsletter-subscribe@yahoogroups.com newsletter (4 per year) with product updates, new research, helpful reports ...

parents - failsafebasic-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
babies - failsafebaby2-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
adults - failsafeadult-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
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See [factsheets](#) for more information

www.fedup.com.au

The information given is not intended as medical advice. Always consult with your doctor for underlying illness. Before beginning dietary investigation, consult a dietician with an interest in food intolerance. You can find a supportive dietitian through the Dietitians Association of Australia www.daa.asn.au or write for our list of supportive dietitians (confoodnet@ozemail.com.au) © Sue Dengate update May 2008