

FOOD INTOLERANCE NETWORK FACTSHEET

Speech delay

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Speech delay is commonly associated with food intolerance.

As with any other food intolerance symptoms, everyone is different so any one or all of the usual culprits can be implicated - additives, salicylates, amines, glutamates, dairy or wheat.

Reader reports

[620] Impaired speech and drool due to food intolerance (February 2008)

We are currently doing the elimination diet and challenges with our son. Interestingly enough, I have discovered that every time he has a food reaction I find it very hard to understand his talking and he also seems to drool more. Just thought these were interesting side effects... – by email

[570] PDD-NOS and failsafe (August 2007)

Our daughter Beth is five and a half. At four she was diagnosed with Pervasive Development Disorder - Not Otherwise Specified, a bit of a mouthful but it sounds like Asperger's shadowing. She is not ASD but has a lot of symptoms in common: developmental delay in speech, fine motor and gross motor, attention deficit, poor eye contact, argumentative, very poor social skills, being in her own world.

... THEN we went failsafe and what a blessing it has been!!!! ... Ten days after starting failsafe, Beth suddenly began running around with all the other kids talking and interacting with them!! Every week, I hear new things that she is doing at preschool. At home she is constantly surprising us with new things that she says and does. It's great!! It is as if a block has been removed in Beth's brain and suddenly she has the possibility of being a normal little girl. Going failsafe is not easy but I had to give her the chance. Even though it may not fix all of Beth's difficulties, it seems to have removed a lot of them, see the full story at <http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/factsheets/SymptomPDD.htm>

[540] Heading towards a diagnosis of autism before - the difference in him is so dramatic the paediatrician was in shock (January 2007)

When I originally wrote to you, my three-year-old son had a severe speech delay, many behavioural problems, refused toilet training, was having upwards of 6 dirty nappies a day and the paediatrician was heading towards a diagnosis of autism.

The first two weeks on the elimination diet were "HELL". My son's behaviour was so bad I was in tears when the day was over and he was in bed asleep. My husband and I were determined to give this a go and we stayed strong together to get him through the rough patch. Four weeks after starting, his behaviour improved each day, the tantrums decreased dramatically, he became calmer, his attention span increased, he was happy to try sitting on

the toilet for me, the autistic traits stopped, he would sit and do activities with me and the most impressive of all in one week he said - "Dad", "Mum" and his own name "Sam". He has never called me mum & it brought tears to my eyes - he has since then said love you mum and tries hard to string words together.

The difference in him is so dramatic the paediatrician was in shock, he is a non-believer of diet having an effect on children, however, after seeing the difference in Sam he was blown away. He said he was pretty sure after the last visit he would end up making a diagnosis of autism for him, now after seeing him six months later he is thinking it is just speech delay and is not so worried about the minor autistic traits. We are focused on sticking to the diet especially with the progress Sam is now making. He does on occasions slip on behaviour - but he is only three. We feel we have our beautiful little man back. – by email, Qld

[399] Excerpt from Reflux medication causes ADHD symptoms and the Parkinsons shake (March 2006)

Having four children who have all been milk and soy intolerant from birth, intolerant to artificial additives and sensitive to levels of salicylates and amines I've seen possibly every symptom food intolerance can produce raise its ugly head at some time or another. ...

I've also seen dairy cause speech problems (this happened to Zac when he was on the follow on formula), tantrums, dyslexia (they can't get their tongue around words, mirror write letters and misspell words), very pale skin complexion, behavioural problems, ADHD symptoms, along with the gutty symptoms, reflux, eczema, and postnasal drip and that's just in my children. If you're at your wits end, if your child displays any of these symptoms or has a learning difficulty especially if there's something happening with each of your kids, even if their symptoms are different, food intolerance is worth looking into. It runs in families. Dietary modification may be the answer you're looking for. My children are now medication free. If your GP doesn't want to go there, find a doctor that will. You need to be strong and assertive because you're going to encounter a lot of doctors and specialists who think it's all a crock, but you have to ask yourself why are there so many kids with ADHD, behavioural problems, learning difficulties unfortunately a lot of the food you buy from the supermarket has artificial additives, for the sals and amine intolerant remember that a lot of the fruits and veg that years ago were seasonal are now available all year round not to mention what they do to them to ripen them and keep them fresh, and for the dairy intolerant look to your genes for the answers, there are several races that are known can't tolerate dairy. It may just change your life. - Sandra, Heathcote NSW (Sandra now coaches children with dyslexia and learning difficulties and is happy to hear from others) See the full story on the Reader Stories pdf

From [391] 282: Speech delay due to the bread preservative (calcium propionate 282) (March 2006)

My son had been assessed by a speech therapist at the preschool. She diagnosed, as best she could - we couldn't really keep Jack in the room much less anything like on-task - a severe expressive language delay and a moderate receptive language delay. Six weeks, later when off wheat products, he was reassessed by the same speech pathologist, using the part of the test that Jack had not done due to being non-cooperative. This time he seemed to have no significant receptive language delay and was only mildly delayed in his expressive language. She said she had never seen a child change so dramatically within such a short period of time. ... It took this family another year to discover that their child's problem was not the wheat in bread, but the preservative calcium propionate. See the full story on the Reader Stories pdf

[357] 282: A typical email about the effects of 282 (December 2004)

I have taken my 3yo son off all commercial bread products (it's become quite a crusade for me!) with marvelous results. He was going to be assessed for autistic disorders in a few weeks, but since taking him off 282 he has changed (he talks now! and his behaviour is so

much better) and I know that his paediatrician will be amazed at his progress. At 18 months my son was only just babbling, and was considered to have the language skills of a 9 month old. After 6 months of speech therapy he was starting to mimic animal noises with prompting. By 27 months he had just two words - mummy and no. At 30 months I took him off commercial bread and at 34 months, he just started talking one day. At 36 months (last week) he now has the normal vocabulary of a 3 - 3.5 year old, and the understanding of language of a 4 year old. He is still having problems with actual speech, he only uses 2 word phrases most of the time and stutters occasionally, but the change in him in 4 months was amazing. He also has less tantrums, sleeps better and is generally easier to get along with. - by email

From [356] One-liners (Nov 2004)

1) Thank you for coming to our town and pointing us in the right direction - we now have a dairy-free happy child who has not seen a doctor in about month except the paediatrician - it was the best he had ever seen her, even her speech has improved. – NSW

2) Our three and a half year old son is a lovely child with a few difficulties when on failsafe food but before diet, he had enough symptoms to class him as autistic: little or no eye contact, spent hours alone fixated with various objects ie string, sand, wouldn't accept hugs or show affection, constant tantrums, his development regressed a lot from about 18 months or 2 years with regard to loss of speech, and for quite a while he said only one word repetitively, as well as severe reflux, diarrhoea, eczema and sleep disturbance. - Qld

[325] Excerpt Autism - on or off-diet during assessment? (April 2004)

My autistic son has been on the diet strictly now for nearly 2 years. He looks terrific and is very healthy with only a very mild sniffle since going failsafe.

He starts pre-primary school this year. It is the school where he went to kindy last year so they are very aware of his requirements such as: no hairspray, aerosol deodorants, perfume etc and are using enjo gloves in the classroom to avoid any chemical being used during the day. Big relief.

We have a five-month wait for the formal disability services assessment to obtain aids for school. I don't know whether to take him off the diet for the period of the assessment. On the diet, although excellent, autistic signs are still evident, for example: no eye contact, no imaginary play, everything is black or white, no flexibility etc. If we take him off the diet we get a severe reduction in speech, tantrums, aggression, argumentative, rashes, red ears, hypersensitivity to noise, dislike of being touched and the list continues.

I am an avid failsafer and can't now imagine life without failsafe (my son has failed all challenges on a number of occasions and is also intolerant to airborne salicylates) - reader, WA.

[300] Dramatic improvement in speech delay (December 2003)

Our nearly two year old twin girls are awaiting a psychology assessment to determine whether they have autism. They both have a few symptoms especially lack of language - only use the words Mum, Dad, Nan, Bub, no and hello. Their understanding is slow although we feel this is improving. Although both show a few signs they also have signs that keep us hopeful that the girls do not have autism. They have fairly good eye contact and are very affectionate little girls. After researching for hours on the internet, I started the girls on a gluten free and dairy free diet last week. By the end of the day, one of the twins (who would normally use maybe one word a month) had not stopped using her basic words and was making new sounds. Within days they had both improved very noticeably. At first I thought it couldn't work that fast but whilst reading your books I have a different view and realise it might be lack of the bread preservative. - Reader, Tas

[289] The Clayton's diet ... the speech therapist was so amazed (September 2003)

A friend of a friend with two young children visited a dietitian who put them on what I can only describe as a Clayton's failsafe diet ... not quite fully failsafe. For example, the dietitian told her that it was perfectly ok for her children to eat McDonalds/Red Rooster chips...

She was introduced to my wife and got into a conversation about real failsafe diets. After 4 days on the real diet, she rang my wife crying with happiness. Her son had settled down to what she considered a 'normal child' to be. His aggression was gone, his tendencies to distraction had disappeared and his sleep had increased by two hours a night. In his first speech therapy session since starting on the real diet, he suddenly managed to recognise 40 words (from picture cards) as well as all primary and secondary colours, where his previous best attempt at word recognition was 8 words. The speech therapist was so amazed that she has already started researching failsafe dieting. The dietitian who put her on the Clayton's diet has now started looking seriously at the failsafe diet instead. It's been two weeks now and our friend is seeing the pediatrician who put her son on Ritalin this week to see about getting him off it completely. She's 100% sure that he doesn't need it at all any more. And remember the sister? She was a chronic asthmatic, but she hasn't needed a puffer since a few days after starting the diet. - from an email discussion group, with permission

From [211] No reason for ADD test (October 2002)

One thing that struck me from one of your books was where you mentioned families travelling to Europe often experience an improvement in their child. Last year (pre diet) we spent 5 weeks in France and Italy travelling in a camping car and couldn't believe the difference in our son. His speech improved considerably, he was much happier and had a lot more energy. At the time we put it down to the fun we were having as a family exploring a new country but now realise it was probably the lack of preservatives in the food. Even pre diet we noticed some of the food you have mentioned - Fanta being a paler colour, ice-creams tasting like they used to and in Italy the pizzas and real home-made chips. The food was much tastier and we noticed that the Europeans eat foods that are in season. . - by email

[178] Ratty behaviour (September 2002)

My son aged 10 is autistic. Our speech pathologist suggested that a big part of the ratty behaviour he often exhibits could be from additives in our everyday food and said what you are saying about our daily bread containing more additives. I have eliminated soft drinks from his daily intake and what a remarkable difference I can see already. - email, Melbourne

[086] "ear working now" (October 2000)

I was at my wits end and about to put my almost 6 year old developmentally delayed son on Ritalin. Fortunately I could not get an appointment until the end of October, so whilst looking up ADHD on the 'net, came across your book, bought it and read it the same day! We started the diet 2 days ago, he said "yes" for the first time in his life today (everything is usually "no"). I haven't seen any tantrums, he has lost his obsession with running water from my kitchen taps (he would spend all day at the sink before, if I let him) and he actually sits down and watches TV and plays with his brothers and sister now. More speech is coming out, his toilet training is going well as he is not urinating so frequently and for the first time in years I can say he's a delightful little boy ... As for my other children, I'm half way through the first week of the school holidays, and my household is actually very calm. I'm just so impressed, I can't help telling everyone about the diet. My four year old son, who has had frequent ear infections, grommets, and a severe language delay, actually came up to me this morning and said that his "ear was working now". And we were just on the verge of having to put him through more traumatic surgery plus spend another \$1300 to replace his grommets. My other sons were constantly at each other's throats previously, but now act like best buddies! ...- reader, email

[043] son improved dramatically despite "known mistakes" (May 2000)

We have only been on the elimination diet for just over 1 week and already my son is very cooperative, less aggressive, trying very hard, more coordinated, happy on waking all the time, listening and responding, throwing fewer tantrums and his speech has improved dramatically. All this with known mistakes! One of his Kindy Gym instructors (who only sees him for 1 hr/week) asked me last week 'what I had done to him'. He was cooperative, obedient and trying to do things he had refused to try previously.- Reader, by email

More information

See also our Factsheet on Stuttering

<http://www.fedupwithfoodadditives.info/factsheets/Factstutter.htm>

Dietitians usually recommend a supervised 3 week trial of the RPA elimination diet followed by systematic challenges to identify the problem(s). You can email confoodnet@ozemail.com.au for our list of supportive dietitians.

Scientific Reference: Clarke L and others. The dietary management of food allergy and food intolerance in children and adults. Australian Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics 1996;53(3):89-94.

Further reading: Fed Up by Sue Dengate, Random House, 2008. Available in libraries, bookstores and on www.fedup.com.au

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)

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