

Nutritional Therapy for Children with Autism

The role of nutrition in the management of autism is just beginning to be recognized. Although nutrition can not cure these disorders, it may play the following roles in the treatment of a child:

- Support brain function and allow the body to perform at its optimal level
- Maximize the child's brain function to enhance response to other treatment approaches
- Enhance immune function
- Enhance the body's detoxification system
- Enhance the body's gastrointestinal system

Recommendations: All children need a well balanced diet. There is evidence to suggest that additional nutrients listed below may help to improve behavior and enhance skills.

- Take a multi-vitamin and mineral supplement daily if your child is not eating a well balanced diet.
- Eat foods high in Omega-3 Fatty Acids or consider a fish oil supplement.*
- Avoid hydrogenated oils since they interfere with the conversion of Omega 3 fatty acids.
- Consume foods high in magnesium. Consume foods high in anti-oxidants such as vitamin A, C and E.
- Avoid foods , vitamins and medications with artificial colors and flavors if they worsen symptoms for your child.

** Consider consulting a pediatric dietitian with regard to nutritional supplementation and the correct dosage for your child.*



Foods Rich In Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Flaxseed oil	Olive oil	Tuna fish
Flaxseeds	Canola oil	Sardines
Soybean oil	Herring	Salmon
Walnuts	Trout	Flounder
Wheat germ	Halibut	Cod/Haddock
Pumpkin seeds		

Limit fish consumption to no more than 6 ounces weekly due to possible mercury contamination.

Foods Rich In Magnesium

Pumpkin seeds	Baked beans	Sunflower seeds
Chick peas	Almonds	Lentils
Cashews	White potato	Spinach
Peanuts	Walnuts	Avocado
Bran cereal	Banana	Shrimp
Wheat germ	Tofu	Salmon

Foods Rich In Vitamin C

Cantaloupe	Grapefruit	Kiwi
Orange	Strawberry	Mango
Green pepper	Broccoli	Cabbage
Greens	Tomato	Cauliflower

Foods Rich In Vitamin A

Cantaloupe	Mango	Papaya
Carrot	Greens	Red peppers
Sweet potato	Winter Squash	Pumpkin

Foods Rich In Vitamin E

Wheat germ oil	Almonds	Sunflower seeds
Vegetable oil	Hazelnuts	Peanut butter
Peanuts	Spinach	Broccoli
Kiwi	Mango	Spinach

Some families have found these interventions helpful. Speak with your medical team or a registered dietitian to be sure your child is getting the nutrition needed if you decide to implement them.



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