

Overcoming Food Obsessions

The general public often doesn't realize what parents of autistic children are keenly aware of: It is a physical condition as much as a mental one. Research shows that more than 50 percent of autistic children have gastrointestinal problems such as Crohns Disease or colitis. Some scientists theorize that autism begins in the gut, with the gastrointestinal walls being damaged and allowing toxins to leak into the bloodstream and affect brain activity. For this reason, parents of children with autism must monitor not just their children's behavior but their eating habits, too. In particular, products containing gluten (found in wheat, barley and rye) and casein (found in dairy products) seem to exacerbate autism symptoms, apparently because the person's body cannot digest them properly and the incompletely digested (and therefore poisonous) proteins are leaking into the circulatory system. A gluten-free, casein-free diet, known as GFCF, has become very popular among parents of autistic children. Some members of the medical community continue to be skeptical of it, but other doctors and organizations -- including those working with Defeat Autism Now (DAN) -- wholeheartedly support the GFCF diet. Many parents report remarkable improvements in their autistic children after removing gluten and casein from their diets. They find their children having longer attention spans, making better eye contact and in general behaving less aggressively and more "normally." The difficult part is implementing the diet. Cereals and dairy products comprise a major part of the typical American diet. People with gluten allergies already know how hard it is to find gluten-free products; adding dairy to the list of prohibited items makes it that much more inconvenient. In addition, many autistic children will latch on to particular foods they like and refuse to eat anything else. Since so many foods have gluten or casein, chances are good that something on your child's "favorites" list will be an offender. Also, because gluten and casein foods act as opiates, autistic children may crave them in particular -- the very foods that are doing them the most harm! So weaning your child off these foods can be difficult. To start with, many parents find it best to eliminate dairy. A lot of people are lactose-intolerant, after all, and dairy products don't make up nearly as big a part of most people's diets as gluten products do. It's fairly easy to replace casein foods with other things. Gluten is trickier. Not only is it in a lot of foods, but even foods that don't have it are often contaminated with it, due to having been processed in the same facilities. You'll need to examine ingredients lists carefully, and check with the manufacturer directly if you're in doubt. Often, parents say their autistic children won't eat anything else, and they worry they'll go hungry if these foods are taken away. It is necessary to be loving but firm, and not to give in if your child behaves badly in response to having his or her favorite foods taken off the menu. Within a few weeks, you'll probably see a change in your child's behavior, and you may be surprised at what he or she will eat that previously was unacceptable.

About the Author

In fact, the majority of all foods consumed by human beings are seeds. While some food can be eaten without preparation, many foods undergo.

Source: <http://www.productsherbal.com>