

## **Alternative Therapies for Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Autisms is a disorder of brain development that causes tremendous disability. Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) include disorders such as Asperger's syndrome which is characterized by poor social & communication skills. These are children who were self-absorbed and who had severe social, communication, and behavioral problems. The prevalence of autism has increased dramatically in the past decade, approximately tenfold.

There may be several different clinical syndromes that cause the picture of "autism". It's likely that this is not simply one disease. The trick to controlling and reversing the symptoms lies in diagnosing the problem(s) that a particular child has.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) & Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) are milder forms of these disorders.

Some children start out quite normally. There are numerous cases of normal 18 months old children who are autistic at 24 months. There seems to be a strong association with the thimerosal preservative in vaccines. This preservative contains mercury, which is very toxic. Certain children are not able to clear toxins as well as others. This explains the variety of clinical manifestations with a genetic explanation.

What are the Causes of Autism?

There seems to be a genetic susceptibility to this disorder. Some gene lines are able to clear toxins better than others.

There is a study group known by the name of "Defeat Autism Now" <http://www.danconference.com> that has put together a comprehensive program for dealing with the victims of this disorder.

Gut Pathogens are another problem. Candida is a yeast that normally grows in the gut. Susceptible people who may have altered immunity can have an overgrowth of this microbe that can cause further problems.

Other microbes within the gut can grow in the wrong proportion causing a micro-flora imbalance that can be corrected with supplements once it's diagnosed. A diet high in simple sugars can also aggravate this gut dysbiosis/imbalance.

Metabolic problems are another area of potential problem for these children. There are many potential "inborn errors of metabolism" in which abnormal body chemistry pathways cause an accumulation of chemicals that are detrimental to the overall function. These can sometimes be corrected with supplements. Methylation is a process that the body uses to rid itself of toxins and viruses. Several problems with Methylation have been found in children with autism. These can often be successfully treated by giving hydroxycobalamine, a form of vitamin B12.

Vitamin deficiencies can be another source of problem. Vitamin B12, Vitamin A and several others can be given as supplements when the patient's levels are too low. These frequently will cause an improvement in the autism spectrum disorders. Methylation is among the processes in which the body helps to clear itself of these viruses. This process is highly dependent on adequate levels of Vitamin B12.

Immunoglobulin G antibodies can form abnormally, typically these react to casein, a common milk protein and gliadin a common wheat protein. Dairy products and wheat products are very common in children's diets. Dietary restrictions of these proteins can have a very beneficial effect. Other food sensitivities also need to be tested for and eliminated when present.

Anti-viral agents can also be quite helpful. Rubella & Measles the Measles and German measles virus can cause sub-clinical infection after those immunizations are given, typically at about 18 months of age.

Mercury and other heavy metals are widely thought to cause or at least contribute to this disorder. These heavy metals are toxic to all of us. Some people are better able to clear the toxins than others. Children seem to be especially susceptible to problems with these. There is a form of medical therapy called "Chelation" that helps the body to clear these toxins. There are several ways to administer chelation therapy; injections, oral supplements, transdermal supplements can all be used. Oral supplements can be problematic if the patient has a gut dysbiosis. As the gut dysbiosis can be worsened with the chelation agents if given orally, this may further aggravate the symptoms caused by the heavy metal toxicity.

There is a form of biofeedback using electroencephalogram (brain wave study) data that can be done as well, this is known as EEG Neural feedback and has shown promise in treating these children.

There is hope for these children. Many of the children with less-severe forms of the autism spectrum disorders such as ADD can also be helped with these therapies. Removing toxins from the diet and the body are essential in promoting healing and restoring well-being. This is important for those with full-blown autism as well as with the lesser disorders in the spectrum of these ailments such as ADD & ADHD. There are many difficulties to be overcome. At times there is also resistance from the "established" medical community despite their lack of adequate therapies for these disorders. Unfortunately, they don't have any alternatives that work well for this spectrum of disorders. These children are frequently institutionalized.

Children with ADD are often put on a long-term stimulant medications without investigating and treating the underlying problems. With proper care however there IS hope for these kids. Many do recover when the myriad of potential problems are correctly diagnosed and treated.

Insurance coverage is an area of problem for these children. Insurers typically consider these therapies "experimental" and won't provide coverage for them.

Further information on Autism can be found at [www.autism.org](http://www.autism.org)

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RJ Oenbrink DO

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