Why My Child is on a Special Diet

Of the thousands of parents who filled in the Autism Research Institute’s survey concerning dietary intervention, 66% said their child improved on a gluten- and casein-free (GF/CF) diet. Please understand that this diet must be followed carefully, because even a few crumbs of a cookie is a very big deal…

“Think Molecular!”

There is no vacation from this diet. Please note that the environment must also be gluten and casein-free - Play-Doh and other substances can be disastrous.

Many children who stray from the GF/CF diet have sudden emotional outbursts and experience uncontrollable diarrhea.

Please only give my child food I have explicitly said is acceptable - don’t hesitate to contact me if you’re unsure about a particular food or item.

You can reach me at_______________________.

There is no vacation from this diet

From Changing the Course of Autism: A Scientific Approach for Parents and Physicians by Bryan Jepson, MD:

“Over the years many parents have reported that their child’s behavior improved measurably after gluten and casein were removed from the diet. Gluten is a protein found in grains and casein is a protein found primarily in cow’s milk. These proteins have been shown to be highly immune-reactive in children with autism, particularly those with GI symptoms.

Dr. Goodwin and colleagues were among the first to document an abnormal brain response to gluten from food in autistic children with GI symptoms. Starting in the mid 1980s, several researchers showed that children who maintained a gluten- and casein-free diet did much better neurologically (improved cognition, language, etc.) than those who did not.

Research has found evidence of food allergies in autism: Dr. Lucarelli and colleagues detected much higher level of antibodies to casein and other milk proteins in children with autism compared to controls, and saw a marked improvement in behavior after an elimination diet challenge; Dr. Jyonouchi and colleagues showed that when challenged with food proteins from gluten, casein, and soy, children with autism produced a markedly higher amount of proinflammatory cytokines, compared with normal controls.”

Supporting Scientific Studies:


An unfortunate, but familiar, story:

“Our son was in a typical preschool at three and was GF/CF. I explained that glue could be a problem, but that supervised use of glue sticks was okay. He was averse to using a glue stick so his teacher rubbed it all over his palm so he could get used to the texture.

Within the hour he was screaming violently for the first time all year. I was called to pick him up, and only pieced it together when I asked what was different that day. Besides the screaming and distress, for three days our son had diarrhea that took the skin off his bottom.

Same thing when he got a corner of a saltine cracker at school. This time was not the teacher’s fault. Our son dove under the table and grabbed a crumb off the floor.

They told us not to worry because it was only a corner of a cracker. This too caused diarrhea for days, and a diaper rash that made his bottom raw.”

--Laura Kay

This is what these foods do to my child’s GI tract; this kind of tissue should be smooth and uniformly pink.

This diet is not specific to autism—many families report benefits for the entire range of developmental disorders and learning disabilities.

Autism Research Institute
4182 Adams Avenue
San Diego, California 92116
www.Autism.com