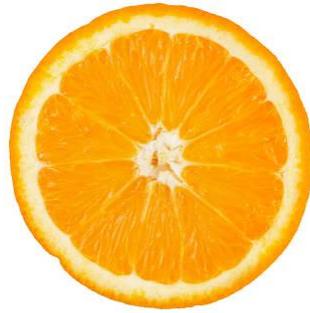


Prep School Performance Nutrition News

with
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Happy National Nutrition Month! For many of you this is spring break month, so I am sending this as you return ready for spring term. This month's newsletter focuses on dietary interventions for ADHD. I have summarized some of the food and diet approaches that seem to be helping at least some students struggling with ADHD. If you are interested in a more complete review of non-drug management for ADHD, please check out the references.

– Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, CSSD, LDN

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
– Can Dietary Changes Help?



Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) affects about 3-5% of school aged children, and occurs more frequently in boys than girls. Traditionally the most effective treatment is

As we head into warmer weather it's a great time to review hydration! I can help your student athletes to develop an individualized hydration plan and teach them how to monitor their hydration. Please call or e-mail me today to set up some sessions for your teams!

Contact Kathleen Searles, MS, RD, CSSD, LDN at 978-697-2834 or ksearles@lunchbox-nutritionist.com.

Indications for Dietary Therapy for ADHD

- When medications are not effective or there is an adverse reaction to medication.
- When the parents or the child prefer a non-

medication plus behavioral interventions. Through the years there has also been a lot of interest in whether diet changes could improve the impulsivity, hyperactivity, and/or inattentiveness that characterize ADHD.

Following is a summary of some dietary approaches that are currently showing some promise:

- "Healthy" vs. "Western" diet – In an Australian study of children followed from birth to adolescence, a healthy diet rich in fish, vegetables, fruits, legumes and whole grains showed a lower risk of developing an ADHD diagnosis
- Omega- 3 and Omega-6 fatty acid supplementation – Some studies have identified possible abnormal essential fatty acid levels in those with ADHD and improvements in academic performance with supplementation.
- Supplementation with selected minerals – Children with ADHD are sometimes low in iron, zinc, or magnesium, and supplementation improves their symptoms.
- Low glycemic diet – A low glycemic diet is one which does not cause large spikes in blood glucose level. Sugar and hyperactivity are strongly associated in the popular culture, although the majority of studies do not bear this out. Eating protein at the same meal with a sugary food seems to reduce any effect of the sugar. (The protein reduces the glycemic index of the meal.) There may be a subset of children who are "sugar responders" who would benefit from this approach.
- Avoiding artificial colors and benzoates – At this time, it appears that some individuals are affected by these food additives and some are not. The difference is likely genetic.
- Diet high in anti-oxidants – This is similar to the "healthy" diet described above, a diet high in colorful fruits and vegetables. One potential risk factor for ADHD is oxidative stress, which the plant based anti-oxidant compounds help to combat.

References:

Millichap JG and Yee MM. "The Diet Factor in Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder." *Pediatrics* 2012 Feb; 129(2):330-7.
Pellow J, Solomon EM, and Barnard CN. "Complementary and Alternative Medical Therapies for Children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)." *Alternative Medicine Review*; 16(4):323-33.

pharmaceutical approach.

- When a mineral deficiency is identified.
- When the child's diet is primarily "ADHD-associated" and could reasonably be improved with the "Healthy" diet. (see side bar)
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Preferred Foods and Foods to Avoid for ADHD
"ADHD-associated Foods"

Fast foods
Red meat
Processed meats
Potato chips and snack foods
Full-fat dairy products
Soft drinks

"Healthy" preferred foods

Fish (not fried)
Vegetables
Tomatoes
Fresh fruits
Whole grains
Low-fat dairy products
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