

All we need is a Healthy Diet Not Drugs!

by
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As a researcher in food ingredients and a father I felt responsible to write this article which is dedicated to all parents who are struggling to bring up their children in this era of processed foods.

One day I was travelling by train to London, and unintentionally I overheard two Muslim mothers talking about their kids and their behavioural problems at school as well as at home. One of the ladies was so concerned that she had to seek medical advice concerning her 7 year old daughter, so I joined in the conversation by uttering loudly the following words; "Hyperactivity, lack of concentration, bad behaviour, restless children". I added; "and I presume your GP prescribed **Ritalin** for your daughter". Both sisters looked at me in a strange way as if acknowledging my comments. After apologising for interfering in their conversation I explained to them the main cause of their problem and advised them to give their children a good healthy diet rather than trying to find a drastic solution through a medical treatment for Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a syndrome (a group of symptoms or signs) affecting children's behaviour.

ADD or ADHD is now estimated to affect one in 10 boys in the UK, where one in five sufferers are girls. However, around two thirds of the children who are prescribed with Ritalin could see a major improvement in behaviour with a simple change of diet. A third of "hyperactive" children have been found to have a severe intolerance to E numbers and other artificial food additives. A study found that 21 out of 24 parents saw that Aspartame had an adverse effect upon their children and 86% of Hyperactive Children had an adverse effect from Artificial Colouring. 59% of diagnosed hyperactive children reacted to MSG (flavour enhancer). [1]

Nowadays many parents are irresponsible; they are stuffing their kids with all sorts of junk food from breakfast to dinner (crisps, cereals, sweets, and juices...) thinking that they are treating them. Some of them will say this is a convenience food, others say it is easy to prepare, and plenty of excuses like I don't have time to prepare a proper meal, or kids don't like eating vegetable. After all this, we wonder why our children are not listening, not performing well at school, behavioural problems, lack of concentration and allergies.

According to **Hyper-Active Children's Support Group** a quarter of a million NHS prescriptions for **Ritalin** are handed out each year to children diagnosed with (ADD) or (ADHD). [2]

Ritalin, a trade name for the prescription drug **Methylphenidate Hydrochloride**, is a central nervous system stimulant. (Its effects are similar to, but more potent than, caffeine and less potent than amphetamine). More private prescriptions for the drug - an amphetamine with many properties similar to cocaine - are also written by doctors in Britain.

Recent scientific research found that some children seem to react badly to specific dye colours and preservatives which are represented below:

E102, E104, E107, E110, E120, E122, E123, E124, E127, 128, E132, E133, E150, E151, 154, 155, E160B, E210, E211, E220, E250, E251, E320, E321.

Parents are advised to avoid giving their beloved children food containing these ingredients which you can find in a vast range of food especially sweets and drinks.

Parents! Be responsible of what you give to your children; do not look only at the Halal side, but the healthy side as well. Remember when you hand a sweet, a lollypop, a pack of crisps or an ice lolly as a treat to your child you are giving him/her instead all sorts of allergies, hyperactivity, attention deficit, obesity and so on. If we love our children we should replace all the junk with natural unrefined foods like brown sugar, honey, fresh fruits, juices and vegetables. Yes it may be difficult, but it will reap rewards for the health of your priceless children.

[1]- HACSG, ADHD the Dietary/Nutritional Approach, a Summary of Research, Irene Colquhoun & Sally Bunday

[2]- HACSG's research 2004.