



IT'S ALIMENTARY!

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Resources on Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

“Biomedical” treatments for autism spectrum disorders are based on the concept that autism is a set of medical or metabolic conditions that are reflected in the biochemistry of many organ systems, and that autism is not a purely psychiatric condition. Psychotropic drugs may help with symptoms but do not affect the underlying medical conditions. Biomedical treatments include diets free of allergies and food intolerances, nutritional therapy, healing of gut inflammation, removal of toxic heavy metals, healing of fungal overgrowths, and many other therapies.

A good summary of the “biomedical” approach appears on the website of the Autism Research Institute: <http://www.autism.com/treatable/index.htm>. The Institute sponsors research, conferences, and a free newsletter of that reviews current scientific articles and treatment options.

Also useful is the website of the US Autism and Asperger’s Association: usautism.org. USAA sponsors research and conferences, offers a free email newsletter, and offers free archives of past newsletters.

A. The best book-length introduction to “biomedical” interventions:

Healing our Autistic Children, a medical plan for restoring your child’s health, by Julie A. Buckley, M.D. (2010). Julie Buckley is a pediatrician and mother of a child with autism. She describes the Autism Research Institute’s protocol, using the format of what would be accomplished at each successive visit to a doctor who specializes in this type of treatment. She recommends the gluten-free, casein-free diet. She explains laboratory testing and how doctors interpret the test results. To purchase her book on Amazon,

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0230616399?ie=UTF8&tag=juliebuckleyc-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=9325&creativeASIN=0230616399>.

Dr. Buckley's own website is <http://www.juliebuckley.com/>.

B. Other good introductory books:

Healing the New Childhood Epidemics: Autism, ADHD, Asthma, and Allergies, by
Kenneth Bock, M.D.

Changing the Course of Autism, by Bryan Jepson, MD

Children with Starving Brains, by Jacquelyn McCandless, MD

C. For more detailed information on “biomedical” treatments:

Autism: Effective Biomedical Treatments, by Jon Pangborn, PhD, and Sidney Baker, M.D.

Topics include laboratory testing, gluten-free, casein-free diets, candida, parasites, toxicities, and supplementation. Supplementary shorter books occasionally update this book.

Biological Treatments for Autism and PDD, by Will Shaw, PhD.

This book covers the same topics but with difference emphasis and detail.

Dr Shaw also offers articles and other information on his website:

<http://www.greatplainslaboratory.com/home/eng/articles.asp>

His e-newsletter may be accessed here:

<http://www.greatplainslaboratory.com/home/eng/e-newsletter/BioMed%20Today%20-%20March%202010.html>

I recommend reading both of these books, both to understand fully what your doctor may prescribe and to detect gaps in treatment that may affect your child. This field is so enormous that no single professional can fully understand every detail. (This plethora of information is very frustrating for those of us who hope for a single practitioner to answer all our questions.) Parents are most familiar with their own children. You may find nuggets that ring true for your own child as you read, and these bell-ringers point out important lines of inquiry to track with your practitioner.

Autism Today offers a 10 DVD set of lectures by wellknown autism specialists. I have not yet worked through this material myself so I cannot recommend it personally. <http://autismtoday.com/autismbiomedicaldvdset.html>

D. Books on Dietary Interventions for Children with Learning and Behavior Difficulties or Autism:

Dietary Interventions in Autism Disorders, by Kenneth Aitken (2009).

<http://www.amazon.com/Dietary-Interventions-Autism-Spectrum-Disorders/dp/1843109395>

Aitken's is the first book to cover (almost) all of the dietary interventions for children on the autism spectrum, including low-salicylate, ketogenic, and low-oxalate diets, explaining the science behind them and the studies testing these interventions. He does not understand amines, and he unscientifically dismisses the evidence concerning the risks of casomorphin from A1 milk. Although I disagree with these points and others, I find this an extremely important and helpful book. For example, he includes many details that are not widely known, such as the need for galactose in a child's brain development, and the evidence for unsuspected epileptiform activity in children with autism. Even those familiar with much of the information Aitken covers will be glad to read a succinct and well-organized summary of the dietary interventions. (The book is virtually unknown in the USA, I assume because Aitken is British—just as the Failsafe diet is virtually unknown in the USA.) This is not a how-to book, but rather a summary to help parents decide where to begin and where to go next.

Nourishing Hope: Nutrition Intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorders, by Julie Matthews.

This book covers gluten-free, casein-free, and specific carbohydrate diets, with a brief section on low-oxalate and ketogenic diets. Matthews also describes common pitfalls of each dietary intervention, the science behind the diets, and supplementation. She also covers environmental and household chemical exposures. The dietary topics are similar to those in Aitken's book, but the focus is more on the practicalities of implementation for parents. You can buy her book on her website: <http://www.nourishinghope.com/> Matthews also offers webinars and private consultations, and a cookbook and DVD.

The Kid-Friendly ADHD & Autism Cookbook: the ultimate guide to the gluten-free, casein-free diet, by Pamela Compart, MD and Dana Laake, RDH, MS, LDN.

This book has an easy-to-understand explanation of why the GF/CF diet works, as well as helpful tips in implementing the diet, followed by numerous recipes that avoid soy and hydrogenated oils as well as avoiding gluten and dairy foods. There are many GF/CF cookbooks out there; this is one of the good ones.

See also the Feingold, Failsafe, and Oxalate-Free Diets. Resources on these diets appear in my document “Resources on Additives, Salicylates, Amines, and Oxalates”

Books on the Specific Carbohydrate Diet:

Gut and Psychology Syndrome, by Natasha Campbell McBride, MD, explains how healing the gastro-intestinal system is a means of healing autism, schizophrenia, and many other physical and psychological symptoms. Natasha McBride relies on the specific carbohydrate diet (see below) plus added probiotics.

Breaking the Vicious Cycle, by Elaine Gottschall.

This is the classic description of the **specific carbohydrate diet** or SCD. The book is indispensable if one is trying to implement the SCD. The diet was originally developed to heal colitis and other inflammatory bowel problems. In the past 10 years or so it has been used successfully with many children with autism.

In essence, the diet disallows all disaccharides, meaning molecules of one or more sugars, such as sucrose, which is a combination of glucose and fructose, and starch, which is a chain of sugars, primarily glucose. Thus, the diet excludes all starchy and root vegetables and all grains (not just gluten-containing grains). Because lactose or milk sugar is also a disaccharide, milk is also eliminated. Homemade yogurt is permitted if it has been cultured for a full 24 hours, at which time all the lactose has been broken down.

The idea behind the diet is that the child’s intestinal tract is unable to breakdown disaccharides into their component sugars. The undigested disaccharides then feed unfriendly bacteria in the gut. Toxins released by the unfriendly biota in turn cause problems in the intestines or in the brain. Eventually, friendly bacteria from the 24-hour yogurt repopulate the intestinal tract and crowd out the interlopers.

Specific food lists are available on the Breaking the Vicious Cycle website: http://www.breakingtheviciouscycle.info/legal/legal_illegal_a-c.htm

Gaps Guide by Baden Lashkov

This book is a step-by step guide to implementing the GAPS diet (which is the specific carbohydrate diet, as interpreted and re-named by Campbell-MacBride.) I have not read this particular book, but I heard a five-hour lecture by the author, and she offered much practical advice. The guide is available at

http://www.nutrivene.com/view_item.php?ProductID=328&

Pecanbread.com is a self-help website for those implementing the specific carbohydrate diets. Includes tips, recipes, and links to other websites.

Body Ecology Diet, by Donna Gates describes using cultured vegetables and beverages to restore intestinal health. This information supplements the specific carbohydrate diet.

VII. Resources on Other Interventions for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Developmental Delay Resources provides up-to-date information on nutrition and non-drug therapies for children with learning problems and other developmental problems. A 10-year compilation of articles is available for purchase. Topics have included proprioceptive therapies, vision training, and educational kinesiology. Website: **devdelay.org**.

Envisioning a Bright Future: Interventions that Work for Children and Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders, by Patricia S. Lemer, editor. Patricia Lemer has been the director of Developmental Delay Resources for many years. From that experience she put together this book, with the help of numerous contributors. It covers vision therapies, sound therapies, homeopathy, educational kinesiology, EEG neurofeedback, applied behavioral analysis, and the Klinghardt protocol for children with autism.

The Handle Institute offers intervention somewhat similar to occupational or physical therapy. Therapists prescribe very gentle activities that are tailored to each individual. The child and parents do the exercises daily for about 20 to 30 minutes a day, then return in a month or two for re-evaluation, to receive a new set of exercises. Each exercise subtly retrains the brain. I have seen the benefits from this program. For more information, see <http://www.handle.org/index2.html> The site also describes sample exercises from which anyone can benefit.