

INFORMATION News

Diet Makes an Impact on ADHD

Date: 12th July 2005, Source: [Althealth News](#) No parent wants her child taking a daily dose of drugs. But drugs are all many parents of kids with ADD or ADHD are left with. That has many looking to alternative ways to help their children.

It wasn't always easy for Austin Armitage to focus, especially in school. Austin has ADD. He says, "Even the tiniest sounds like tapping a pencil on a desk on the other side of the room, I would hear it, and I would just get really distracted, and I couldn't work."

But Austin's mom, Melanie, was wary of starting her son on medication. She says, "I wanted to try some things that were natural before we did that and look at the medication as a last resort."

She turned to naturopathic doctor Wendy Weber, N.D., from Bastyr university in Seattle. "I find that a lot of parents just aren't comfortable with the medications that are available, and so they really want other options," Dr. Weber says.

She says the top five foods that aggravate ADHD are wheat, dairy, citrus, eggs and corn. Eliminating one or more of these foods can make a big difference. Dr. Weber says, "There are some foods that aggravate some kids; the hard part is that not the same food will aggravate every child."

Supplements can also help. Dr. Weber says when kids are deficient in essential fatty acids, they can appear to have ADHD.

Dr. Weber says about 85 percent of the kids she sees have at least some improvement. Austin is one of them. Melanie says: "Within four weeks he was noticing a difference. I was noticing a difference. His teacher was noticing a difference."

Those big changes came by adding Ginkgo and fish oil to Austin's diet. "The fact that he can take supplements and have a notable increase in his performance is just fantastic," Melanie says.

Dr. Weber says the results from dietary changes are not necessarily immediate and may take up to eight weeks to show any changes at all. There have been small studies done on a number of dietary changes for kids with ADD and ADHD, all with varying degrees of success. She does say about 15 percent of kids she sees will not respond to dietary changes.

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