

5 Things Kids with ADHD Should NOT Eat

Could a high-protein, low-sugar, no-additive diet plan can actually help your child manage ADHD symptoms? Find out in this video.

5 Foods Kids With ADHD Should NOT Eat

Red dye #40. Gluten and casein. Refined sugar. Dairy. Artificial preservatives. Each of these may lead to increase hyperactivity, decreased focus, and other health and behavior complications in some children with attention deficit disorder ([ADHD or ADD](#)). But each child is different, and what exacerbates symptoms in one may not cause any discernible difference in another.

Here are some of the most common dietary triggers for ADHD symptoms;

work with your child's doctor to determine the best way to test your child's sensitivities to these five.

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1. Artificial Flavoring and Preservatives

Roughly 5 percent of children with ADHD are sensitive to chemicals in food. For these kids, the Feingold Diet — or another like it — may improve symptoms. That means NO:

- Artificial food colors
- Flavorings
- Sweeteners
- Preservatives
- Salicylates

2. Sugar

Processed sugar is a simple carbohydrate that provides quick bursts of energy and burns out quickly.

Kids with ADHD are particularly susceptible to bouts of hyperactivity, inattentiveness, and impulsivity after consuming it.

Sugar hides in various disguises:

- Corn sweetener
- Corn syrup
- Corn syrup solids
- Dehydrated cane juice
- Dextrin
- Dextrose
- Maltodextrin
- Malt syrup

- Maltose
- Molasses
- Rice syrup
- Saccharose
- Sorghum
- Sucrose

3. Food Dyes

Artificial food colors may lead to hyperactivity, irritability, and sleep disorders in some kids with ADHD. Experts recommend eliminating Red #40, Blue #2, Yellow #6, and sodium benzoate, then watching for behavioral changes. The following natural food colorings are OK:

- Annatto
- Anthocyanin
- Beta carotene
- Caramel
- Carmine
- Chlorophyll
- Paprika
- Red beets
- Saffron
- Turmeric

4. Pesticides

Dr. Sandy Newmark, founder of the Center for Pediatric Integrative Medicine, recommends that anyone with ADHD limit pesticide exposure as much as possible.

Buy organic food whenever possible and avoid the "dirty dozen" with the highest levels of pesticides.

5. Trigger Foods

Children can have a sensitivity to certain foods — dairy, wheat, corn, soy, eggs, nuts, and citrus are common culprits — that can exacerbate symptoms.

Try eliminating these foods, and watch behavior carefully.

How to Treat ADHD in Children: Next Questions

1. [What ADHD medications are used to treat children?](#)
2. [Is ADHD medication right for my child?](#)
3. [What are common side effects associated with ADHD medication?](#)
4. [What natural treatments help kids with ADHD?](#)
 - [What are the most effective natural ADHD treatments for kids?](#)
 - [What foods can help control ADHD symptoms?](#)
 - [What vitamins and supplements should my child take?](#)
 - [Does brain training help with ADHD?](#)
 - [How much and what type of exercise helps kids with ADHD?](#)
 - [What types of therapy help patients with ADHD?](#)
5. [What if the medication stops working?](#)
6. [How can I find an ADHD specialist near me?](#)