

Abstract

Ann Allergy. 1994 May;72(5):462-8.

Foods and additives are common causes of the attention deficit hyperactive disorder in children.

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BACKGROUND: The attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) is a neurophysiologic problem that is detrimental to children and their parents. Despite previous studies on the role of foods, preservatives and artificial colorings in ADHD this issue remains controversial.

OBJECTIVE: This investigation evaluated 26 children who meet the criteria for ADHD.

METHODS AND RESULTS: Treatment with a multiple item elimination diet showed 19 children (73%) responded favorably, $P < .001$. On open challenge, all 19 children reacted to many foods, dyes, and/or preservatives. A double-blind placebo controlled food challenge (DBPCFC) was completed in 16 children. There was a significant improvement on placebo days compared with challenge days ($P = .003$). Atopic children with ADHD had a significantly higher response rate than the nonatopic group.

CONCLUSIONS: This study demonstrates a beneficial effect of eliminating reactive foods and artificial colors in children with ADHD. Dietary factors may play a significant role in the etiology of the majority of children with ADHD.

PMID: 8179235

