



healthy, not hyper, kids!

Is the epidemic of hyperactive and ADD kids, at least in part, the result of what we're feeding them? Quite possibly, if the experts are to be believed.

Eliminating artificial food colourings and benzoate preservatives from the diet of young children can significantly reduce hyperactive behaviour, according to a UK study.

The findings, published in *Archives of Disease in Childhood*, are based on healthy children rather than those with a known food chemical sensitivity or hyperactivity. Researchers concluded that removing additives from children's diets in general could benefit all children.

where additives are found

Additives linked with problem behaviour are in soft drinks and cordial, lollies, flavoured snacks, crisps, biscuits, takeaway food and ice-cream. However, they also lurk in apparently healthful foods, such as bread and yoghurt!

A smaller Australian study has also demonstrated that behaviour worsened in about half of children tested with bread containing calcium propionate (282), a preservative. The preservative is found in an increasing range of Australian and

New Zealand foods, such as bread, crumpets and hamburger buns.

what to do

1. Feed your children more fresh, plain and minimally processed foods. Fruit makes the best snacks.
2. Read labels and avoid additives that may cause problems. The commonly reported culprits include (but are not limited to) food colourings 102, 110, 122, 124, and the preservatives 210 to 213, and 280 to 283. Food Standards Australia New Zealand (our food regulatory authority) has published *The Official Shopper's Guide to Food Additives and Labels*, which contains a wealth of information, including a list of all additives and their numbers, so you can crack the code when shopping.
3. Make sure your child has a healthful breakfast to start the day; skipping breakfast is associated with irritability, nervousness and poor behaviour in the classroom. See **page 44** for a recipe to help your child be healthy rather than hyper!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For further information on healthy eating, please contact *Sanitarium Nutrition Service*

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