

## Attention Deficit Disorder

Newsletter optional point of view:

Hi, I'm Janet Barre' sharing "my point of view" concerning a nutritional approach to dealing with numerous and often perplexing health problems. Where does my source material come from?

Personal (-nel) adj. 1. Private; individual 2. Belonging to, pertaining to or affecting a particular person.

Experience (ek spir' e ens) noun 1. The act of living through an event(s) 2. Anything or everything observed or lived through 3. (A) training and personal participation (B) knowledge, skill, etc., resulting from this.

Forty years ago I took a detour from the mainstream procedure to solving health problems and began investigating and applying a nutritional plan instead. I own and operate my own health food store and share my discoveries and observations with my customers. Please examine my real life anecdotes and see if any of them "fit." I trust that this information will do more than entertain you.

Let's start with the overwhelming number of children being classified as having ADD. Is there really such a thing as Attention Deficit Disorder? Of course. This is an identifiable problem not only for some children but also adults. However, there are legions of children out there being given this label with no real support for the diagnosis. Many authorities in the field believe that hypoglycemia, or low blood sugar, is often the underlying cause of misdiagnosed cases of ADD and ADHD. Year after year I've had families coming into my health food store filled with frustration. Not too long ago, I had three families come into my store in just one morning with identical complaints.

"The nurse, the teacher, the doctor (pick one) says that we have to put our child on Ritalin. We don't want our child on drugs, but we don't know what to do." I see these parents being threatened and helpless. One child that I talked to was only 7 years old. She was charming, bright, and inquisitive. Her mom said that the teacher's chief complaint was that the child was "antsy". What was her favorite food? "All she'll eat is junk food. She just wants candy and soda and Hershey's kisses. She simply won't eat anything else " I was compelled to ask the mother, "Does your daughter do the grocery shopping?"

I explained at length how excessive sugar can negate your B vitamins that protect your nervous system. It can also raise havoc with your blood sugar which can cause agitation, nervousness, depression, anger, mood swings, a lack of concentration, hostility, and a host of other symptoms. I shared with her the fact that there are upwards of 10 teaspoons of sugar in every soda. I stressed the need for home-cooked balanced meals. She agreed to make a concerted effort to implement these changes. When she came back three weeks later, she told me that she couldn't believe the change in her daughter. The only problem that had surfaced was when she spent one of the weekends with Grandma. Grandma thinks it's terrible that her granddaughter doesn't get candy. Therefore, she gave her all the

candy she wanted. After her daughter came home, her mom said that she was "antsy." Hmmmmmmmm

I had another mom come in with her 15-year old son who had been on Ritalin for 9 years. She said that the boy never sees the doctor. The doctor just calls in the prescription for him. Now she was more distressed because they wanted to put her 5-year old son on Ritalin also. Left to his own devices, the child would have destroyed my store. I had a lot of visual evidence of the source of her dismay and that of the teacher.

Then the question, "What food has he had to eat today?"

"I can't get either of them to eat good food. They just want soda and junk."

Hmmmmmmmm Two more youngsters doing the grocery shopping??

The mother was in tears and said that she has to try harder to prepare nutritional meals.

"It's just easier to do fast food. I work all day, and I'm too tired when I get home." She admitted that she sees them "act more crazy the more junk that they eat." I never saw her again.

The sad thing is that so many of these parents are told that it doesn't matter what their children eat. No one has ever explained to them that when your body is craving sugar, it's usually because you're not getting enough good quality protein. Sugar cravings can also indicate a chromium and B vitamin deficiency. Just like smoking depletes your Vitamin C, sugar depletes your B Vitamins.

People are told in the newspaper and on TV that chocolate is good for them. Did you ever try to swallow bitter chocolate? It's so vile that you'd spit it out. They have to put a massive amount of white sugar in it to make it palatable. It's also an enemy of calcium. Add to the mix the caffeine it contains, and you have a great formula for "antsy-plus".

I answered the phone at my store some months back and heard an unfamiliar female voice. She said, "Hi, Janet. I need help. About 8 years ago, you helped me straighten out my health problems. When you see me, you'll see that I stopped listening. But I want to get back in shape. More than that, my husband and I want to bring my son in. The school is adamant that we put him on Ritalin. They've called us in three times, and we keep saying 'no'. We just came from the doctor's office. We went there to bring the results of his tests and the reports from the psychiatrist. I handed him the papers, and he didn't even look at them. He just scrawled a prescription for Ritalin and handed it to us. I told him I'm sure that sugar has a lot to do with his problem. I told him that all my son needs to do is have one soda and he's bouncing off the wall."

She added, "The doctor said, 'That's ridiculous. Sugar couldn't do that. He needs to take this drug.'"

The three of them, the mom, the dad, and the 10-year old boy, came in to see me the next day. We sat down in the corner to chat. We'll call the child 'Robert'. This is how our conversation went:

"Hi Robert. Your parents seem to think that you have a problem. Do you think you have a problem?"

"I guess so."

"A guess isn't really an answer. Obviously someone is complaining about your behavior. Do you know that is?"

"The teacher?"

"You tell me. Is the teacher complaining about you?"

"Yes."

"What do you do that seems to bother her?"

"I walk around."

"Why would that bother her? Everybody walks around. Even she does."

"I walk around when I'm not supposed to."

"When?"

"When everyone else is reading."

"Why do you do that?"

"Because I just can't sit still. I have to get up and move around. I can't help it."

"What's your favorite subject?"

"Math."

"When do you have math?"

"First thing in the morning."

"Do you walk around then?"

"No."

"When do you have reading?"

"In the afternoon after lunch."

"What do you usually eat for lunch?"

"Whatever they have - pizza, whatever, and my chocolate milk."

"Do you like chocolate milk?"

"I love chocolate milk."

"Okay, let's turn things around. Let's pretend that you're the teacher and I am you. How would you describe me as I'm walking around?"

"You're selfish "

"Oh my, what else?"

"You're a troublemaker "

"Hmmm. What else?"

"You don't care about anyone but yourself."

"Okay, what else?"

"You're just looking for attention."

"Hmmm. Okay."

"Now let me ask you, Robert, do you think that you're selfish?"

"No."

"Do you think that you don't care about anyone but yourself?"

"No."

"Do you believe that you're just looking for attention?"

"No."

"Apparently then, that's the teacher's opinion of you and not yours, correct?"

"Yes."

"Then we have to look for another reason. You'd be amazed at the problems that too many sweets can cause." I went on to explain to him how our bodies work. When we take in too much sugar, it makes the pancreas secrete too much insulin which pulls the sugar out of the blood. When the blood sugar drops, you can get antsy, irritable, angry, annoying, nervous, lose your ability to concentrate, etc. I told him that the only way he could find out if this is what was contributing to his problem would be to cut out the sweets. I explained that there were supplements that he could take to cut the craving for sugars.

His mom also said that he's "all over his bed at night." I explained how our calcium levels drop at night, so that it's important to take some

calcium before bed. That would probably help calm him down and sleep more peacefully.

Robert was really eager to try this experiment. His parents were behind him 100%. None of them wanted him to be on drugs unless deemed necessary.

I heard from his mom over the next few weeks and received excellent progress reports including that he wasn't "all over the bed at night anymore". A couple of times he "slipped" and had chocolate milk in school. He himself commented on how upset he became and "antsy" after he drank it. About a month later, he came in with his parents to see me.

"How's it going, Robert?"

"My teacher says I'm the best kid in the class "

His mom said, "He drives me crazy now. When we go into the supermarket, he reads labels and will say 'This has too many carbs; put it back'".

Hmmmmmmmm An educated child helping with the grocery shopping Take what you want from this account. I'm not a doctor, and I'm not prescribing. I'm just sharing this personal experience and my point of view.

Thanks for your company, Janet Barre'

\*\*Publisher's Note: Janet is a published author. Her book YOU BETTER NOT CRY, was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. Janet owns and operates the World of Nutrition On Market Square in Newington, CT 06111.