

# Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

The causes of ADHD are not fully understood, but there is evidence suggesting an environmental component to the condition. With increasing frequency, food and food additives have been implicated in the condition. The following is not comprehensive advice. Every child is unique and may require a personalised version of the following restrictions.

Elimination diets seem to be the best dietary interventions to improve ADHD symptoms in children. An elimination is an eating plan that omits a food or group of foods believed to cause an adverse food reaction.

The following are recommended for removal temporarily, if not permanently from the diet:

- **Fried Foods** and foods containing saturated fats.
- **Refined sugar.**
- **Processed foods** (food colourings, artificial flavouring, preservatives, MSG, processed meats, added sugars, artificial sweeteners such as Aspartame).
- **Dairy products** especially cow's milk. Use almond or rice milk as an alternative.
- Grains containing **Gluten** such as wheat, barley, rye. Use gluten-free grains such as quinoa, millet and buckwheat instead.
- **Yellow Foods** (especially corn or squash - bananas are okay if no salicylate implications [see below]).
- **Chocolate.**
- **Salicylates** containing foods - often implicated in ADD/ADHD. These are tricky to eliminate from the diet because they occur naturally as well as being used as additives.

*Salicylates are found in almonds, pears, apricots, apples, bananas, blueberries, cherries, cucumbers, grapes, grapefruits, lemons, melon, nectarines, oranges, peaches, plums, prunes, raisins, raspberries, peas, green peppers, hot peppers, pickles, tomatoes. Start by being aware of how often these foods are included in the diet, their quantity can be modified from there.*

- **Caffeine** – check carbonated drinks.
- **Food allergens**: eliminate foods you know your child is allergic or sensitive to.

### Dietary Tips for ADHD:



- Eat **homemade meals** with all-natural ingredients.
- Eat plenty of **raw organic** vegetables and fruits.
- Include **quality protein sources at every meal** to help maintain balanced blood sugar levels. Some good protein sources to consider are wild-caught fish, grass-fed organic meat, eggs, legumes, nuts and seeds, protein powder.
- Make **protein shakes** ahead of time and store them in the freezer. Protein shakes are great for breakfast or as a snack.
- Consider **fish oil supplementation**.