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taste for life



TRUE BLUE

10 PERFECT FOODS FOR MEN

AFTER-SUN SKIN CARE • GET GRILLING • ARE YOU ORTHOREXIC?

**MIND/BODY
METHODS**

Regular meditation can improve ADHD in adults and children, helping to sustain greater focus and cognitive ability. Research shows meditation supports neurological health in numerous ways.

THRIVING with adult ADHD

IMPROVE FOCUS AND FUNCTION

Experts aren't entirely sure how many adults have ADHD—anywhere from 3 to more than 10 percent of the population. Many take medications; however, there are more natural approaches. By supporting balance in the brain with diet, supplements, and other methods, people with ADHD can harness the power of their active minds for greater benefit.

Mysterious causes

Genetics may be a contributing factor, but data also points to environment. Pesticides and toxins are strongly implicated, along with the Western diet. Whatever the cause(s), ADHD has a measurable impact on the brain—studies show changes in neurotransmitter function, loss of neurons, and other differences.

Drug-free approaches

Adults and children are often prescribed powerful drugs to control ADHD. Ritalin, Adderall, and similar treatments dramatically alter neurotransmitter function. These drugs might be effective in the short term, but what do they do over time?

While these approaches have helped some people lead normal lives, it's also important to know there are healthy alternatives. I recommend lifestyle approaches using diet, supplements, and mind/body practices to improve focus and brain function.

A number of studies show that refined sugar and processed ingredients, particularly food coloring agents, aggravate ADHD. It's important to reduce sugar and processed foods in our diets—but with ADHD, this is a critical must. In addition, many ADHD patients show sensitivities to foods like wheat, egg, dairy, corn, and soy.

A diet emphasizing fiber, high-quality protein, green leafy vegetables, and in particular, omega-3 fatty acids (flax, salmon, sardines, fish oil) may offer the most benefit against ADHD. Choose whole, organic foods to reduce pesticide and toxin exposure.

ADHD is also linked to nutrient deficiencies. Shortages of zinc, magnesium, selenium, calcium, and iodine worsen ADHD symptoms. Supplementing with these nutrients supports brain health.

Herbs and supplements

A number of herbs can help. In studies, white peony root, ashwagandha, gotu kola, spirulina, water hyssop, and lemon balm improved cognition and helped with impulse control.

Since pesticides, heavy metals, and other toxins are implicated, it's also important to engage in gentle detoxification.

One ingredient that's particularly effective for detoxification is modified citrus pectin (MCP). Derived from the pith of citrus peels, MCP is a type of pectin that is modified for increased effectiveness throughout the body. MCP is clinically proven to safely remove heavy metals and toxins from the body. ■■■

Isaac Eliaz, MD, LAC, is medical director of the integrative health center Amitabha Medical Clinic in Northern California.

SELECTED SOURCES "Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Data & Statistics," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov ■ "A Compound Herbal Preparation (CHP) in the Treatment of Children with ADHD" by J. Kartz et al., *J of Attention Disorders*, 2010 ■ "Dietary Sensitivities and ADHD Symptoms: Thirty-five Years of Research" by L.J. Stevens et al., *Clin Pediatr (Phila)*, 4/11 ■ "The Influence of Components of Diet on the Symptoms of ADHD in Children" by K. Konikowska et al., *Rocz Panstw Zeki Hig*, 2012 ■ "The Role of Modified Citrus Pectin as an Effective Chelator of Lead in Children Hospitalized with Toxic Lead Levels" by Z.Y. Zhao et al., *Altern Ther Health Med*, 7-8/08

