

Episode# 37 ADHD and diet

Hi. Today we're talking about ADHD and diet. This is episode 37. Let's get started.

Smarter Parenting welcomes you to our podcast series, The Parenting Coach for ADHD. Here to heal and elevate lives is your parenting coach, Siope Kinikini.

Hey, everybody. Hope everybody's doing well. How is everyone today? I am doing fantastic. And actually, today it's one of those really touchy subjects that we'll be talking about regarding ADHD and your diet, or the diet your child is taking.

I know a lot of parents who have done a lot of research online, and there's a lot of information. But one of the things that I've noticed on there is that there's a lot of conflicting information about diet, and how diet affects ADHD. And so, we're going to talk about ADHD and diets, ADHD management, diet for ADHD kids. Those are some of the areas that I wanted to talk about, and kind of wading through all the different types of information that are out there.

Now, the first thing that I do need to stress right here is that because your child is different than other children, it's important for you to work with a medical professional. So, this is by no means something that I am telling you to do. I'm just providing you information, to help you make some decisions on how you should approach diet in helping your child. Because what may affect one child may affect another child differently, as you notice. I'm sorry. I've got some kind of weird cough going on, so.

Anyways. So, let's talk about ADHD and diet. Now, there have been a lot of articles written about it online. There are things that are available to read. WebMD has some information on it, as well. I actually went through the internet, to wade through all of the information there, and what I found was there's just so much information, and so many different points of view about diet, that it made it difficult for me to make a decision. Because one expert would be saying, "Yes, do this," and another expert would say, "No, don't do that."

So, I'm going to go back and actually just focus in on the things that we know are optimal for health. Right? For just anyone. And that's actually moving towards eating more healthy foods. Portion control is important. And then, being able to choose foods that are easier for the body to digest. Right? So, we all know these things. I mean, we all know what we should be eating. Fruits and vegetables mainly. You know, protein, we should include there, in whatever way that you want to do it. Some people don't eat meat, and some people find other ways to do that.

But it's kind of moving more towards that area of just eating more healthy, more natural. More Omega-3 fatty acids. You can find this in fish. Tuna, salmon, and cold water whitefish. Walnuts, brazil nuts. And you can find it in some oils. Olive and canola oils are other foods with these

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items. So, that's helpful. More complex carbohydrates, which include vegetables and some fruits, including oranges, tangerines, pears, grapefruits, apples... Holy cow. I am getting super hungry right now, because it sounds delicious. Right? High protein. Beans, cheese, eggs, meat. You know, depending. There's a lot of flexibility in there, for you to add some of this into what it is that you choose to eat. Because not everybody likes the same things, but there are a lot of options out there for you to try.

Now, the reason that I make mention of this is because these are the foods that make anyone, I mean even athletes, perform at their optimal level. These are foods that are being consumed by professional athletes, in order to have their body really in tune with what they're doing. And so for us, as we progressively work with a child with ADHD, we want to be able to fuel their body with all the things that will make them work optimally in any situation. When we put into our bodies a different kind of fuel, it can affect the way that we interact with the world. Right?

Some of the things that should avoid are, like corn syrup. Candy is another one. I know we use it to bribe, sometimes, kids, but we should be avoiding some of those things. I had a doctor once who told me that the best thing for me is to just consume things that were not man-made, and so that's always stuck in my brain. You know?

I still have an ice cream thing that I reward myself with, and I kind of figured that cows are natural, right? So, anyways, anything that's man-made, try and avoid those things. So, I actually try and gear my diet towards things that are more in the environment, in the world, that you could grow. Those types of things. So a lot more salads, nuts. I love raisins, trail mix. You know, without the candy in there. And I try and avoid all the other stuff.

These things, I've noticed have been very helpful for me. And again, what we want is to create this ability for a child to optimally function in the world that they're in. There are some articles that talk a lot about whether or not you should take a supplement. And some doctors recommend that you do, and some recommend that you don't. And that if you're eating a balanced diet, then you don't need it. And so, that's a discussion you need to have with your pediatrician or with your medical professional.

Because remember, your child is different, and will adjust and work differently, especially if they're on some type of medication for the ADHD. So the other foods will be fairly safe to eat, but again, check with your physician. The ones that I had mentioned before.

Be really aware of additives in foods, and artificial stuff that is in foods. Avoid caffeine, for example. There's a time for me, and still now, for me to consume a Diet Coke. For me, preferably a Diet Dr. Pepper. I love Diet Dr. Pepper. Doing that actually helps calm me down sometimes when I'm kind of nuts, but I know consuming that all the time is not helpful. It's not optimal for me, because the side effects of that are actually worse. So, it's kind of a balance between what's the side effect, and how is this going to affect me, and how does this work. Right?

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Now, this seems like information that you all know, right? And it is. It's information that I think we all know. The reason that I wanted to cover it, though, is because there is just so much information that is available, but they're all contradicting information or information that contradicts each other, except for eating a balanced diet. That's one thing, across the board, all the doctors in the articles that I have read always recommend. Eating more healthy helps to fuel your body to work optimally, and that's what we want with the kids that we're working with, who struggle with ADHD.

Do I believe that dieting is the cure to ADHD? No, I don't. I think that with every child and every person who struggles with it, they're going to have to find a balance between how they work through it, and what they need to do to make it to function appropriately. So, you know. But, but, and everybody has a but, and that's from Pee Wee Herman, if you've seen that movie. It's awesome. Anyways. But, I do believe that when we [fuel our body with things that really help it](#), that it does decrease a lot of the other issues that are involved in the way that we function, and the way that we work overall.

So, really take into consideration making some dietary changes if you need to. If you are dealing with a very, very picky eater, do not make it a battle between them. Just introduce foods slowly to them. You can find that you can disguise, sometimes, the food in there, and then later let them know, and that way they can get a sense for it. Find out. And this is an important one if you have a picky eater. Find out if there's something else going on. Do they lean towards texture, or you know. Sensory issues. A lot of autistic children struggle with foods. They're picky eaters.

And so, ask yourselves these questions. Are there things that you need to consider that may be outside the realm, that make them a really picky eater? But you can usually introduce foods slowly to them, maybe to try something, try something else. You know, have them prepare a meal with you is another effective way to help them kind of get in the process of creating this thing. Have them create the meal and then feed the family, and have everybody enjoy it. That's an additional tool that you can do for a picky eater. In fact, we should probably cover picky eaters on here. And so, I'm going to do that in a future episode.

I'm glad that we had this talk, right? I'm going to cover that in a future episode, where we talk about ADHD and children who are picky eaters as part of the diet regimen that you are trying to implement with your child, to help decrease some of the symptomology of ADHD. So, look for that in the future. That's going to be coming soon. Because actually that's a fascinating one. And there are some very specific things you can do for [picky eaters](#), that will be very, very helpful.

So, in closing, and I'm closing now. In closing, just be aware that there are some things. Some foods will fuel and help your body work optimally, and other foods will not. And if you want to take the advice of my doctor, which I thought was super helpful, anything that's man made you want to avoid. Anything that can be grown, that's actually better for you. So, and you can do that

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on a spectrum of, "Yeah, I'm going to focus on this area, and being sure that I get those every day, and then I can treat myself." Because I treat myself with ice cream. I'm sorry. I just. It's one of those things. I got to feed my soul. You all know how that goes, right?

Anyway, that's it for me. If you have an issue with your child, a very specific issue that you want to address. Or you need some [ADHD parenting coach sessions](#), we have that available. In fact, I can coach you through some of the issues that you may be confronted with. Happy to do that. You can find that information on the Smarter Parenting website, under our coaching area. Sign-up for a coaching session, and let's do this.

I actually love doing this, because I'm able to connect with people from everywhere. And it's super great to hear your stories and hear what you're working on, and then to provide some very concrete tools that will help you move along. My goal is always to give parents a couple of tools that they can use, in order to help them progress in their journey with their child. And so I look forward, actually, to doing that. So if you have a very specific issue, sign-up for the coaching, because I am totally here to help you.

The materials, though, on the Smarter Parenting website, as far as [parenting lessons](#) and information on ADHD, all of that is for free and downloadable. The coaching session does have a fee to that, and that's just to help us with our costs. Because actually, we operate on the generosity of donations. And so, if you want to donate to Smarter Parenting, you could do that, too. You can find that over on the Smarter Parenting website. Feel free to share this podcast if it's been helpful. And give us a five-star rating over anywhere that you're listening to this podcast, and we would totally appreciate it. Until next time, I will talk to you soon. All right. Bye.

Resources discussed in this episode

[ADHD Smarter Parenting Coaching](#)

[ADHD series part V: "What are you eating?" The ADHD/food connection](#)

[5 ways to get picky eaters to eat](#)

[Behavior skills lessons](#)

[ADHD Smarter Parenting information](#)

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