

# Color Johnny ADHD

Our lives are filled with color; it brings pleasure in countless ways.

Color is an important part of food – alerting us to a time when fruit is ripe, making it easier to obtain needed vitamins and minerals by selecting a diet made up of foods of different colors. But Mother Nature doesn't stop with mere eye appeal; she saw to it that foods which are good for us also taste good. Does that mean that healthy eating simply requires us to follow our eyes and palate?

Unfortunately, this approach which has served humanity well for thousands of years, has been upset by the wonders of modern food technology. The problem began when a chemist first discovered how to change coal tar oil into brightly colored liquids which then found their way into virtually everything we use, including food.

Chemists have managed to unlock many of the secrets of nature's flavorings, and can now come very close to mimicking the real thing.

All this is great news for food manufacturers. Both synthetic colors and flavorings are cheap and remain stable in food.

Today most food colors are made from petroleum, and flavorings can be made from thousands of natural and artificial chemicals.

So what's wrong with a bit of petrol in your popsicle? Does it matter that cherry gelatin doesn't contain any cherries and the grape drink mix has never been near a grape?

And if fluorescent cereal will get breakfast into little Johnny, do we really need to be concerned? Unfortunately, we do.

Humans have a remarkable ability to tolerate exposure to harmful substances, but we're not identical, and some of us can handle more than others. In a world where neither our water nor our air is pure, where food is treated with pesticides, growth hormones, antibiotics, and genetically modified organisms, where excessive processing has removed many essential

nutrients and fiber, a lot of us are already having a tough time coping. Then add three of the more troublesome chemicals: synthetic food dye, artificial flavoring, and antioxidant preservatives, and feed them to a child.

It's a recipe for disaster. Johnny might have a physical reaction to such a chemical stew such as a stomach ache, asthmatic attack, tics, bed wetting, hives, poor muscle control, or ear infections.

He could have a behavior reaction, becoming overactive, easily frustrated, aggressive, or excessively talkative. He may have a hard time paying attention in school, reading a story, remembering a spelling word, doing a math problem or writing. Johnny may be a

normal child who is merely sensitive to some of the abnormal substances in his food or environment.

The first place to begin is to rule out chemical sensitivity, and fortunately this is not as difficult as it sounds.

A non-profit parents' group called the Feingold Association was established in 1976 by families whose children had been dramatically helped by the Program. These volunteers show families how they can easily determine if their child is reacting to the most troublesome of these chemicals and how to live happily without them.



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