Correlation Between Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder And The Food We Consume

While ADHD may be on the rise and researchers can't quite understand why, there has been documented correlation linking ADHD, and the foods we consume. Food dyes can play a role in ADHD. The diagnosis of ADHD has become more prevalent in our society. Children are being diagnosed now more than ever. Foods contain more additives and preservatives that do not belong in our food. Food dyes/ artificial food colors in particular are worrisome. Food dyes are placed in our foods to market the distributor and so that the color attracts attention to the consumer. The amount of food dyes used in our foods today has increased drastically over the last few decades.

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (also known as ADHD) is usually diagnosed during the adolescent years. However, more recently it has been seen during the adult years. ADHD may affect one's behavior, cognitive skills, and even mood. ADHD is broken down into two components. These include hyperactivity and inattention. Symptoms include aggression, impulsivity, hyperactivity, irritability, absent-mindedness, difficulty focusing, brain-fogginess, short attention span, anxiety, and mood swings. In some cases, ADHD is responsible for learning disabilities and depression. ADHD is noted in the classroom among children due to the inability to remain seated and the lack of paying attention. These symptoms can affect the ability to learn and academic performance. Children with ADHD may have a harder time obtaining good grades and sometimes forced to repeat a grade without the proper diagnosis and treatment plan. Although it is likely to be noted in the classroom, it must be diagnosed by a clinician and be seen in two different settings (home and school etc.). "Children must have at least six symptoms from either (or both) the inattention group of criteria and the hyperactivity and impulsivity criteria, whereas older adolescents and adults (over the age of 17 years) must present with five. Most symptoms should have been present before the age of 12 years." Unlike other disorders ADHD does not affect life expectancy, and a person can live a functional life with the disorder.

Researchers performed a study in an urban town in Morocco to confirm if there is any correlation between food additives and hyperactivity in children (or ADHD). The study included 239 students from an urban public school. The youngest participant was 6 years old and the oldest participant was 16 years old. Information needed from the participants was nutrition habits and economic status. The DSM-IV was used to evaluate ADHD. Researchers allowed the children to consume cookies and soft drinks from the nearby markets. These items were used to determine if the food additives caused hyperactivity. The results showed that there was a correlation between ADHD and food additives. "Indeed, a significant correlation between this disorder and the food additives contained in cookies and soft drinks bought from the local markets (p