

13 February 2018

Special Diets for Tourette's Syndrome

Children with a diagnosis or suspected diagnosis of Tourette's syndrome can benefit tremendously from special diets. The research is split on whether or not dietary intervention is beneficial. One of the biggest reasons why is that special diets decrease the inflammation flooding into the body. Since developmental issues like Tourette's Syndrome, OCD and AD/HD are based in dysregulation of the immune system, it is essential to identify foods that can further cause immune abnormalities.

The digestive tract is responsible for regulating inflammation and immunity. Special diets work for kids by helping to protect and repair gut tissue. Some children with Tourette's Syndrome, OCD and ADHD do not respond to special diets without having additional gut support in the form of essential fatty acids, anti-microbials and probiotics.

GFCF – Gluten Free Casein Free

Gluten has been definitively linked to gluten. Children with Tourette's Syndrome have been shown to have abnormal responses to gluten. Gluten has been altered in the last several decades and is now a protein that wreaks havoc in the body. Chemical manipulation of gluten has resulted in a substance that can and does exacerbate symptoms of Tourette's. The toxicity of gluten damages a child's ability to breakdown casein. Casein is a protein in dairy and can be found in all dairy products. Gluten is actually made up of many proteins. Wheat is the only grain considered to contain "true gluten". Gliadin and glutenin the two main groups of proteins in gluten and are found in many grains including wheat, rye, barley, spelt, kamut. Gliadin is the protein that causes problems in children with Tourette's Syndrome and is generally referred to as "gluten". Gluten is in EVERYTHING, even popsicles and stickers!

GFCF diet takes time. Benefits are a result of removing foods that

damage the digestive tract and also actively healing the digestive tract. Most patients on the GFCF diet also benefit from removing soy and corn, making it the GFCFSFCF diet.

This important research about allergenic proteins has changed the lives of many children with developmental disorders. The gluten free casein free diet has the potential to benefit in a number of different ways. All relate to the digestive tract. Removing gluten and casein can benefit children by addressing:

- Food allergy – IgG mediated immune reaction to food
- Food sensitivity – creates inflammation
- Dysbiosis – imbalance of healthy microorganisms (probiotics) in the digestive tract
- Inflammation
- Opiate or drug effect on the brain from incomplete breakdown of gluten
- Nutrient deficiencies

Benefits of dietary intervention including GFCF (SFCF) include:

- Decrease in motor tics
- Increased speech and/or language use including increases in effort to speak, number of words spoken, complexity of sentences and conversational speech
- Improved social interaction including increased interest in peers and siblings, initiation of play, appropriate use of toys and improved tolerance in larger groups
- Decreased self-stimulating and self-injurious behaviour
- Increased ability to focus and enhancement of cognitive function
- Improved digestion, sleep and immune function
- Increased awareness or “being present”