

Pure Facts



February, 1986

Vol. 10, No. 1

Aspartame and Seizures

A long-time critic of the overuse of aspartame reports that three people had their first epileptic seizures after consuming large amounts of the artificial sweetener.

Dr. Richard Wurtman of the Mass. Institute of Technology, in a letter to the British medical journal *Lancet*, says the cases "can only suggest an association between aspartame and the seizures" and do not prove a cause-effect relationship.

Wurtman's animal research with the sweetener, marketed as **NutraSweet** and **Equal**, has shown that it blocks the brain's neurotransmitters, which prevent seizures.

In all three cases, the victims drank a quart or more a day of aspartame.
Continued on page 3

A Mother's Story

Our little boy will be six next month, and it will be four years since we started the Feingold Diet. It's hard to believe the nightmare we all went through.

Mark was such a cheerful little baby until he was about six months old and I introduced solid food. We moved at that time, and I assumed his radical change in behavior was the result of the move. I never suspected it was the foods and baby vitamins he ingested.

His record for sleep was 3 hours. A day with my son alternated between loudness, constant motion, and short periods of sleep, generally one or two hours.

By one year, he slept through the night, but awoke screaming. This was his only form of communication except for one word: "see." When we got a puppy, Mark learned

to imitate it. Looking back, it's funny to recall that my son spoke two words, one of which was "woof." But at the time my husband, Martin, and I didn't laugh at that, or at much of anything else, for that matter.

His record for sleep was three hours

I was with this miserably unhappy baby for 24 hours each day. Who would want to baby sit? There were times when I thought I was cracking up, and I even daydreamed of being institutionalized . . . somewhere restful and quiet!

The few other adults I encountered weren't much help. "You're spoiling him." "He certainly knows how to get his way." Why was I made to feel so guilty?

I turned to my doctor for help and received a sarcastic, "If he's this bad at two, we'll refer you to a psychiatrist."

When Mark was one and a half he got a terrible case of diarrhea. (I didn't realize at the time that it was caused by cow's milk.)

This went on for three months, and all the medications my doctor tried were of no help. Another doctor in the group told me to put Mark on a very restricted diet, with only three foods.

Gradually, the diarrhea stopped, but most astonishing was the dramatic change in Mark's behavior. Gone was the child who behaved as

Continued on page 2

Busy Cooks Make Breakfast

"I really have this "thing" about getting a good breakfast into my boys each morning" explained Feingold mom Terri O'Leary, "it makes a big difference in how they do all day."

Terri and Jim have been enthusiastic Feingolders for many years since Terri first saw Dr. Feingold on the Phil Donahue Show. She volunteers as a Diet Assistant for the Washington Area association, does research and writing at home, and has gone back to school. Although she likes to cook, Terri appreciates having ready-to-go foods on hand.

Her favorite convenience food is French toast, which she makes in quantity and freezes.

Continued on page 3



Mother's Story, from page 1

though he was possessed, and my sweet little boy was back. ("See, he outgrew it," explained a relative.)

My two year old's vocabulary of one word and a bark suddenly became a torrent of words and even some short sentences. Within a week he was naming all of the letters of the alphabet.

Since we had lived in the Orient, I was eager to reintroduce soy sauce into Mark's limited diet. Twenty minutes after eating some, the screaming returned . . . and was to last for three days. The monster was back, but this time I understood why. "It's what he's eating!"

By one year he slept through the night but awoke screaming.

I knew about the Feingold diet, but thought it was all about removing sugar. I read the *Feingold Cookbook* anyway, looking for more information about diet and behavior. That's where I saw a brief note about sodium benzoate, a preservative found in most brands of soy sauce.

The next three years were good, and we were a normal family. Neither my husband's parents nor mine understood what we were doing, but Mark knew to say "no" to forbidden foods.

Gone was the child who behaved as though he was possessed.

It all seemed to fall to pieces last winter just before Christmas. I was working and Mark spent the day with a sitter he adored.

The first thing I noticed was that my sweet-natured little boy abruptly became negative, depressed and argumentative. No amount of reasoning penetrated his hard little head. He called himself a "bad boy," believed no one loved him, and said he

"wished he was dead."

Frightened, I wondered where to turn. The diet was ok; I had checked it over and over; the sitter was so careful; he wasn't getting anything he shouldn't.

I was home from work for a period of four days, so I had Mark with me. By the fourth day, he was back to normal. The following day he went to the sitter's and the reaction started up again.



Then my Feingold newsletter came, and in it was a caution about using kerosene heaters. The sitter had one in the room where Mark spent most of his day! He stayed out of that room afterward, and has been fine.

I worry about my son, about the problems he will face, and the consequences if he doesn't always choose to stick with his diet.

His kindergarten teachers are great; they cooperate with me 100%. But will he have the maturity to say "no" to his peers in the coming years? Will society understand that beautiful children are suffering what Dr. Feingold called "chemical abuse?"

I hope to make a contribution. This fall I plan to enroll for my master's degree in nutrition, and perhaps I will be able to help other mothers who dream of escaping from their child.

Ann Bailey
Woodbridge, VA

From the Diet Assistant's Notebook

Here are some samples of comments Diet Assistants have heard from new members who are having problems:

"I know it's not on the foodlist, but the package said it was all natural."

"The baby gets vitamin drops every day."

"You mean he can't use colored toothpaste?"

"They're working with varnish in shop class."

"She only had *one* of those artificially flavored cookies."

"Our dentist told him to use the red disclosure tablets every day."

"My neighbor said it was homemade."

"He had a lot of allergies as a baby, but he outgrew them."

"My little girl collects scented stickers."

"Yes, I use fabric softening strips. Why?"

"I didn't think the preservatives were so important."

"My doctor gave me a foodlist dated November, 1979."

"I thought if it was sold in a health food store it would be ok."

"We were doing fine until he got a cold and I gave him the orange cough syrup."

"Now that you mention it, his teacher does use a lot of perfume."

"I didn't know that Goobers candy wasn't on the foodlist any more."

"The coach gives everyone Gatorade after practice."

"They were out of 7-UP so we got a drink that looked like it."

"No, we've never tried eliminating the salicylates."

Don't let a few setbacks discourage you. Your Feingold volunteers can help you because we've made most of these mistakes ourselves!

The Choice is Yours



Ingredients: milk, enriched bleached flour (bleached flour, malted barley flour, ferrous sulfate, niacinamide, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin), whole egg, corn syrup, whey, sugar, salt, partially hydrogenated soybean oil (with lecithin, **artificial flavor**, beta carotene, **BHA** and **BHT** added to preserve freshness), yeast, partially hydrogenated soybean oil (with **TBHQ** added as a preservative), water, soy flour, yeast nutrient (calcium sulfate, ammonium sulfate), calcium propionate (a preservative), corn starch, ferrous fumarate (an iron source), niacinamide (one of the B vitamins), dough conditioner (potassium bromate), pyridoxine hydrochloride (one of the B vitamins), riboflavin, thiamine mononitrate, vitamin B12.



Feingold French Toast

Beat eggs with a small amount of milk or water.

Add a little cinnamon or pure vanilla extract

Using 2 or 3 loaves of bread, dip a few slices at a time into the egg mixture, and fry in a lightly oiled pan.

Store the cooked slices in a plastic bag and freeze.

To serve: Remove as many slices as desired. Heat in a toaster or microwave oven. Drizzle with honey or favorite topping.

Sulfite Ban Proposed

The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has proposed banning all use of sulfites on raw fruits and vegetables in supermarkets and restaurants, where the preservatives have been used extensively to keep salad bar fare looking fresh.

Sulfites are not believed to be a problem for the average individual, concluded a panel established by the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology. But for the estimated 1 million sulfite-sensitive individuals in this country reactions to foods containing sulfites can range from hives, nausea and diarrhea to shortness of breath and fatal shock.

FDA regulations already require that labels on finished packaged foods indicate if the product contains sulfites. Products so labeled include lemon juice, maraschino cherries, grape juice, some packaged fresh mushrooms, dried fruits & vegetables and some canned soups.

FDA Consumer 11/85

Unfortunately, wines—which frequently contain the preservative—are excluded from these regulations.

Sulfiting agents are not prohibited on the Feingold diet; however, some members report sensitivity to them.

Aspartame, from page 1

tame-sweetened beverages. One of them drank more than two gallons.

In each case the seizures disappeared when aspartame intake was stopped, Wurtman said.

A spokesman for G.D. Searle & Co. which makes NutraSweet, says the seizures may have been caused by drinking large amounts of water. "We have every confidence in its safety, and our confidence is based on the research," Dr. John Heyback told the Associated Press.

Washington Post 11/20/85

Microwave Scrambled Eggs

They are fast and leave no pan to wash. You will need to have a 4-cup size measuring cup or microwave-safe deep bowl. (Buy yourself a large measuring cup for Valentine's Day. It's a real time and work-saver!)

Into a 4-cup size measuring cup, break 4 eggs. Beat them briefly with a fork.

Add 3 Tablespoons **milk** or cream, and 3 teaspoons **butter**. Stir. Place the cup in the microwave and lay a piece of waxed paper over the top.

Cook for about 2 minutes on power level 6, or 60%.

Remove from oven and stir the eggs.

Put them back in with the waxed paper cover and cook for an additional 2 1/2 to 3 minutes.

Don't overcook, or eggs will lose their lightness and become rubbery.

To prepare different quantities of eggs, use this formula:

1 egg, 1 Tablespoon liquid, 1 teaspoon butter, cook for 1 to 1 1/2 minutes.

2 eggs, 2 Tablespoons liquid, 2 teaspoons butter, cook for 2 to 2 1/2 minutes.

4 eggs, 3 Tablespoons liquid, 3 teaspoons butter, cook for 4 1/2 to 5 1/2 minutes.

6 eggs, 4 Tablespoons liquid, 4 teaspoons butter, cook for 7 to 8 minutes.

Parent's Favorite Breakfast

Of all the breakfasts at the O'Leary household, Terri and Jim liked this one best.

When the boys were old enough to be up on Saturday morning without supervision, but too young to get their own breakfast, Terri prepared the food on Friday night.

Place a tray or cookie sheet (with a rim around the edges in case of spills) on a shelf in the refrigerator.

For each child, prepare a small glass—or tip-resistant mug—of juice, and a small paper cup of granola. Set the food on the tray for tomorrow's breakfast.

While the kids watched cartoons both Mom and Dad could catch some extra sleep, instead of one of them having to get up (which equals two unhappy parents—one resentful and the other guilty!)

Note to *Pure Facts* Subscribers

If you are a new subscriber to *Pure Facts* you may not be aware of the other materials available from the Feingold Association.

Membership in a Feingold Association brings you not only this newsletter, but a complete set of literature, including:

- *The Feingold Handbook*
- a Foodlist for your area of the U.S.
- Medication List
- Foodlist updates

If you would like to convert your subscription to membership in a local association, please contact the FAUS office: P.O. Box 6550, Alexandria, VA 22306.

PIC Report

The pharmaceutical company, Parke-Davis, has developed a form of erythromycin for children—ERYC 125.

While the capsule itself contains synthetic dye, the pellets inside the 125 mg size are free of dyes, flavorings and preservatives.

Parke-Davis writes, "...the suggested method of administering the product is to open the capsule and sprinkle the contents on a small amount of applesauce." (This would be suitable for the Feingold child who is not sensitive to apples.)

NOTE: Only the 125 mg size is approved for use. The pellets in the 250 mg size contain dyes.

Product Alert

Caution: Please delete the following anti-asthma medicine from your Medication List:

Marax DF syrup (Roerig)
It contains synthetic flavoring.

The member who brought this to our attention has a very sensitive little boy who is almost 4 years old. She finds that Gregory's reactions vary with the substance consumed, and are very consistent.

The flavoring in the Marax syrup brought a 3-day reaction of excessive talking and physical overactivity.

Salicylates cause a reaction similar to flavoring, but less severe.

BHA and BHT cause him to talk in his sleep and grind his teeth, a reaction his father shares as well.

Most severe for Gregory, is the reaction to synthetic dyes. His mother reports that he becomes divorced from reality. He will repeat the same request over and over for hours at a time, and be unable to absorb any explanation or information given him.

She was finally able to track down the cause of the reaction: the purple dye used to stamp meat.

His mother believes Gregory experienced hallucinations as a result of his last exposure to synthetic dyes.

After several terrible weeks, she was finally able to track down the cause of the reaction: the purple dye used to stamp meat.

When the beef was ground up to make chopped meat the purple stamp was ground in with it. Once the purple dye was removed from his diet, Gregory began to calm down, and was soon back to his real self—a bright, pleasant 3 year old.

His mom now selects a piece of meat and asks the butcher to cut off the portion with the stamp and grind the meat for her.

Pure Facts

Editor: Jane Hersey
Subscription Manager: Gwyn Wertz
Contributing Editors
Chicago: Brenda Larrance
Detroit: Karen Dorries
Fort Worth: Carolyn Allen
Los Angeles: Colleen Smethers
New Jersey: Cyndy Witzke
New York: Pat Palmer
San Francisco: Lynn Murphy
St. Paul: Sue Maldonado



What is FAUS?

Pure Facts is published monthly, except for combined July/August and December/January issues, by the Feingold Association of the United States, Inc. Subscription rates: \$12 per annum in the U.S., Canada and Mexico; \$16 elsewhere (payable in U.S. currency). Additional contributions gratefully accepted.

The Feingold Association does not endorse or assume responsibility for any product, method, service, or treatment presented in this newsletter. This is provided for the reader's information.

The Feingold Association of the United States, Inc., founded in 1976, is a volunteer, non-profit organization. The purpose of the Association is to support members in the implementation of the Feingold Program and to generate public awareness of the potential role of food and synthetic additives in the treatment of behavior, learning and health problems. This program is based on a diet eliminating synthetic colors, synthetic flavors and the preservatives BHA, BHT and TBHQ.

To find the location of the nearest Feingold Chapter or obtain general information about FAUS, write to: Feingold Association of the United States, Inc., P.O. Box 6550, Alexandria, VA 22306.