

Pure Facts

Newsletter of the Feingold® Associations of the United States



July/August, 1993

Vol. 17, No. 6

Asthma

Among the potential triggers for asthmatic attacks, the American Lung Association lists: food additives, azo dyes [the synthetic dyes eliminated by the Feingold Program] and benzoate preservatives [i.e., sodium benzoate].

The Food and Drug Administration requires that Yellow No. 5 be listed by name on ingredient labels. This is due, in part, to their recognition of the danger the dye can pose for asthmatics.

More children affected

The incidence of asthma has risen drastically in recent years, particularly in children. Approximately ten million Americans suffer from asthma, and of that number, more than three million are children under the age of 18. In just four years between 1982 and 1986, the number of affected children grew by 25 per cent. Not only has the disorder become more common among children but it has increased in severity, particularly among black children living in inner cities. In 1987 the asthma death rate in East Harlem was almost ten times the national average. (Reported in the *New York Times Magazine*)

Deaths from asthma have doubled in the past decade. Since 1989 is the last year for which figures have been compiled, this toll could be far higher today.

Asthma disables children more frequently than any other condition, according to Miles Weinberger, professor of pediatrics at the University of Iowa College of Medicine. He notes that more than ten percent of all children now have, or have had, asthma and the greatest increase in hospital admissions for asthma is among 1 to 5 year olds.

The rate of children being hospitalized doubled between 1970 and 1978, but innovations in medical treatment do not appear to have kept pace with the growing problem.

In 1979 death from asthma for each 100,000 children ages 5-14 was placed at 0.1, but by 1985 that number tripled to 0.3 deaths.

In people ages 15-24 the increase doubled from 0.2 to 0.4 deaths per 100,000.

A child who is exposed to second hand cigarette smoke is at greater risk for developing asthma, and this is a particular problem if the mother or primary caregiver is the smoker.

According to the Allergy Information Association of Canada, even the unborn child of a smoker may be harmed because a reduction of oxygen available to her can affect the oxygen supply for the fetus.

Asthma and allergy

Dr. Benjamin Burrows, a researcher at the University of Arizona College of
Continued on page 3

FAUS Conference features scientific innovations, plus practical help for children

Speakers addressed many facets of the needs of children, particularly those with behavior and learning problems, including Attention Deficit Disorder or A.D.D.

Children know a lot about *things*, but not very much about *themselves*, noted conference speaker, Sal Nicosia, a long-time educator who now counsels children. We need to reexamine how we teach children, how we reach the inner child. When it comes to our children — our future, there is no room for neglect.

There are innovative programs being introduced into schools, and they are equally effective for parents. He en-



couraged parents to "plug into" them. One of the programs mentioned is called Active Parenting, a Georgia program offering practical workshops.

Caring parents know it is best to discipline a child privately, away from his siblings. But this is rarely ever done in the classroom. The child who is reprimanded in front of his classmates will gain nothing positive — only embarrassment and a lowered self-esteem.

Continued on page 4

The Feingold® Associations of the United States, Inc., founded in 1976, are non-profit volunteer organizations whose purposes are to support their members in the implementation of the Feingold Program and to generate public awareness of the potential role of foods and synthetic additives in behavior, learning and health problems. The program is based on a diet eliminating synthetic colors, synthetic flavors, and the preservatives BHA, BHT, and TBHQ.

Althea's Story

In the literature an increasing number of articles are being published about asthma; they indicate through scientific study that the incidence and mortality rate of asthma are increasing at an alarming rate. The medical community has not identified why this is happening.

The medications and technologies are also growing in number, complexity and cost in an effort to relieve this life threatening and debilitating condition. Many times the patient has to look beyond accepted medical treatment and find what works for him.

During my early "Feingold years" I worked as a nurse practitioner in a large Southern California H.M.O.'s Walking Well Clinic.

In my department we were encouraged to develop a limited practice of patients whose stable medical problems needed only monitoring. Althea fit into this category and came in regularly for general check-ups, blood pressure control and asthma management.

The asthma had plagued her since childhood and was, by far, her most serious problem. In the early 1950's when Althea was a young married, with two small children, she was told to move away from the East Coast if she wanted to see her children grow up.

In the early 1950's asthma was, in general, a mystery to the medical community. The treatment for asthma and its severe complications required a long, arduous recovery.

As I got to know Althea I developed a real respect for this no-nonsense lady who had learned to live with her debilitating condition. She used many medications and adapted to the many limitations the asthma placed on her lifestyle.

On smoggy days Althea stayed home in her air conditioned house — venturing out only in the cool mornings. The in-house confinement lasted from February to July; it greatly hampered this baseball-lover's trips to Angels or Dodgers Stadiums where she dearly loved to go and cheer her favorite team. When a really important game was scheduled, Althea would take her pills, "puff her pipe" (as she called the inhaler) and attend the game anyway — often paying the price with an acute asthma episode.

Althea came into our clinic from time to time with acute bronchitis. She required antibiotics, refills for her inhalers and medications, but had a demeanor that said, "Let me out of here, I'll be just fine." She had managed her asthma most of her life, and since she recovered successfully from acute episodes the Physician/Mentor I worked with did not question her judgement and self-care.

For several years Althea came to the clinic for check-ups with a "Hurry up. Lemme outta here, I have better things to do today" attitude.

On one of her regular appointments Althea came in, sank into the chair and declared her frequent headaches had become more severe and were now constant, and I was to "fix it." She admitted to having headaches for years, but never mentioned them before because she hated taking "more pills" and there was nothing we could do about them anyway. Her face was pale with dark puffy circles under the eyes. Her usual sparkle was gone. She was wheezing more than usual and her blood pressure was mildly elevated. The clinical picture she presented was of allergic response.

In those days my Feingold energies and information were focused on children, but I was aware of the food allergy-headache relationship, and started Althea on a testing program for wheat, milk, eggs, chocolate and nuts. The foods were tested one at a time, and when she tested nuts, the different varieties were introduced one at a time.

On Althea's follow-up appointment she still had constant headaches and was discouraged with her detective work, reporting no response to any of the categories of food. The one exception was a definite increase in symptoms when she ate almonds, which she did almost daily. Almonds...salicylates...it rang my Feingold bell!

Trying (unsuccessfully) to contain my excitement, I explained the implication of her detective work and gave her

the information on the Feingold Program.

Althea was very serious about feeling better and implemented the necessary changes in her diet so successfully that by using the diet, along with a change in medication, she became headache-free within a short time.

The other benefit for Althea was a dramatic improvement in her asthma. Whenever she let the diet slip, her headaches returned and the asthma worsened. Encouraged by the improvement, she identified other offenders and further refined her eating and life-style. Althea continued to improve her health and quality of life.

Within a few months she was so delighted by her new freedom from symptoms, this gutsy lady took a 6,000 mile automobile tour of the United States. Even more remarkable, the trip took place during the months of May and June, when she previously would have been locked in her air conditioned house.

All along the planned route friends and relatives had a doctor standing by for the medical emergency (Althea) that was expected to pull into their driveway. Except for "puffing on her pipe" in humid Texas and Florida, the trip was a healthy, grand success — which would have been impossible in the pre-Feingold days just a few months earlier.

Many years of asthma took their toll on Althea's lungs, and she ultimately moved out of the Los Angeles smog to the clearer air of the Arizona desert. She lives an active semi-retired life that includes a data entry job she works at out of her home. The only asthma medicine she needs is her "pipe" as long as she follows her diet.

The scientific work continues, in an effort to identify causes and find better treatments for asthma. If you are suffering from this difficult condition, or watching your child's life being disrupted, while you wait for a medical breakthrough, you may be losing valuable time and the opportunity for a better quality of life.

Colleen Smethers, R.N.

Asthma, from page 1

Medicine, conducted a study of 2657 people and concluded that all types of asthma are allergy-related. His findings challenged the long-held belief that there were allergic and non-allergic types of asthma. It was reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine* - March 1, 1989.

Although statistics lend themselves to various interpretations, professionals who work in this field are clearly alarmed, and the problem is being reported by other countries as well.

Canada's Centre For Disease Control reports similar troubling statistics. Among people between ages 15 and 34, there has been a 163% increase in asthma-related deaths. They also note the greatest increase has been in deaths among asthmatic women. Canadian epidemiologist, Dr. Donald Wigle, suggested that "environmental factors such as food additives or air-tight office buildings containing irritating pollutants may be increasing the rate of fatal asthma attacks." [Note: an epidemiologist is a scientist who uses statistics to identify potential causes for health problems.]

The British medical journal, *Lancet* noted a startling increase in asthma among that country's school children. Between the 1940's and 1980's the number of asthmatic children tripled. The *Lancet* reported: "environmental agents - including traffic jams, industrial and domestic pollutants, ventilation plants, tobacco smoke, natural allergens and food additives - can help to provoke bronchial hyper-reactivity and so provide the background conditions for the development of asthma."

Other suggested triggers

An often mentioned trigger for asthmatic attacks is sulfur dioxide [*Journal of Allergy & Clinical Immunology* 1985;76;40-45] and the various sulphur based preservatives. Sulfites have been used not only in salad bars, wines, and some convenience foods, but have been added to medicine for asthmatics.

Research at the Royal North Shore Hospital in Sydney, Australia points to MSG (monosodium glutamate) as a potential trigger.

Dust mites, animal dander and cigarette smoke can be even more potent irritants if they are found in air tight homes, schools or offices.

A surprising finding on asthma was reported in the *British Medical Journal*. Researchers found that in the majority of asthmatics, an increase in salt consumption led to more severe attacks.

About two years ago the *New England Journal of Medicine* described artificial flavoring in toothpaste as a potential cause of bronchospasms in some asthmatics. [In addition to artificial flavoring, toothpaste typically contains dye and saccharine, both petroleum derivatives which Feingold members report as triggers for asthmatic attacks.]

FDA cautions asthmatics

The Food and Drug Administration lists a wide range of potential triggers for asthmatic attacks. These include exercise, respiratory tract infections, a wide range of environmental irritants, both at home and in the workplace, as well as certain drugs and food additives.

The list of intrinsic asthma "triggers" goes on and on, including aspirin and other anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin) and indomethacin (Indocin), and the food and drug coloring tartrazine yellow (FD&C Yellow No. 5). FDA requires that this dye be listed on the ingredient labeling of all foods and those drugs taken internally in which it is used, to alert the 47,000 to 94,000 asthmatics the agency estimates may be sensitive to it.

FDA is also concerned about the group of chemicals known as sulfiting agents that can cause serious problems

for an estimated 5 percent of all asthma sufferers (and as many as two-thirds of asthmatic children, according to *The Harvard Medical School Health Letter*). *FDA Consumer: 1/95*

Finally, the following dyes used in medicines were noted by the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Drugs as being bronchoconstrictors:

Red No. 2
Red No. 3
Red No. 4
Yellow No. 6
Blue No. 1
Blue No. 2
[*Pediatrics*, October 1985]

Editor's note: When a dye, such as Red No. 2 or Red No. 4, is banned from use in foods that does not necessarily restrict its use in medicines.

Asthma medication can backfire

There appears to be a growing concern that the use of bronchodilators actually poses a serious threat for asthmatics. When the medicine is inhaled, relief can be fast, giving the impression that the crisis is past and lulling the asthmatic into the belief that he can remain where he is. The medicine opens the airways, exposing the already sensitive lungs to even more of the irritant.

Women at high risk

A study presented at the 1990 World Conference on Lung Health questioned the connection between the practice of prescribing sedatives and tranquilizers, sometimes in combination with antihistamines, and the increase in deaths from asthma. The Public Citizen Health Research Group reported that women are twice as likely to be given prescriptions for these additional drugs than men, and their death from asthma has increased twice as fast.

Like many other childhood afflictions where the cause is not understood, parents seeking help may find themselves blamed for their child's problem. Incredibly, a past president of the College of Allergists was quoted in the early sixties as saying, "One of the commonest types of juvenile asthma is caused by an overprotective, domineering mother...the best treatment is a "parentectomy" - separating the child from his mother." *Allergy Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No.

Sal understands that these techniques can only work once a child is calm, alert, and in control; this is why he has served as a Feingold consultant for so many years.

Gerald Deas, M.D.

Another long-time Feingold supporter is Dr. Gerald Deas, a physician practicing in Queens, NY.

Dr. Deas described the multitude of problems facing the inner city child, particularly the inner city black child who is statistically at highest risk for asthma and hypertension.

Just as certain liquors and cigarettes have been targeted for the inner city consumer, the same is true for junk food.

Dr. Deas noted that on a typical city block you can find between 5 and 7 stores selling it. Among the worst products are little plastic bottles of synthetically colored and flavored water, known as "quarter water." Families buy it by the case and give the little bottles to their children in place of water.

Dr. Deas went beyond descriptions of the problems, asking the attendees to understand the perspective of the inner city parent. Life is hard and dangerous, time and money are scarce, and supermarket shopping is difficult when you don't own a car. A sweet tasting drink may be perceived as a small pleasure the parent can offer a child.

Another inner city product with a notorious history was an old fashioned laundry starch.

Some populations of women living in the rural South had a practice of chewing on clay, just as others enjoy chewing gum. They liked the crunchy texture. The down side is that clay chelates iron from one's body. This can eventually cause anemia, and death.

When a woman moved to the North, there was no clay, but the old fashioned chunk laundry starch was a good substitute. Like clay, the starch robbed a woman of iron and could lead to death.

Eventually, other forms of laundry starch were developed, and there was no longer any need for the old fashioned chunk starch which required boiling. But the starch did not disap-

pear from grocery shelves. In fact, it was moved to the food section, and was even packaged in small boxes that could easily be kept in one's pocket or purse.

The starch continued to be chewed, women continued to die, and the company made no effort to change anything.

Dr. Deas asked the company to change it to a powdered form, or at least add a substance to make it bitter tasting, but all of his pleas were refused. Then, unable to enlist the help of the government, public health officials, or other leaders in the black community, he single-handedly took on the company and eventually succeeded in having the product discontinued.

Charles Richardson

Charles Richardson believes that children who have difficulty learning may simply be in over their heads, and are being blamed for a mistake that is not theirs.

For many children, the techniques now being used to teach reading are not very good and not being comprehended. He advocates going back to traditional methods which have worked well for years.

He believes the most important rule in learning is to "start where the child is", to find the spot where the child's understanding has stalled, and to go back to that place, building on what the child does know.

Charlie Richardson describes remedial teaching as "just good teaching done later."

Each of the conference speakers share many characteristics in common. They are experienced professionals who have long understood Dr. Feingold's work and its tremendous value, and they have a passionate concern for children.

Bernard Weiss, Ph.D.

None of our advisors better fits this description than Bernard Weiss, Ph.D. Dr. Weiss is a behavioral toxicologist at the University of Rochester School of Medicine & Dentistry. He worked with Dr. Feingold, particularly in the design and implementation of an FDA sponsored research study on the effects of food dyes on children.

Dr. Weiss described the importance of understanding that even tiny amounts of toxic materials can have a damaging effect, and that infants and the unborn are the most vulnerable.

He criticized the concept that, below a set level, a heavy metal such as lead, is thought to have no effect. Recently, scientists have begun to understand that this concept is wrong. In the 1970's lead levels below 40 micrograms were believed to be "safe"; today the threshold is placed at just 10 micrograms.

It was once believed that pregnant women could safely drink alcohol if they didn't overdo it, but newer research indicates that small amounts of alcohol can have measurable negative effects on children of such women. A youngster need not have obvious physical characteristics of fetal alcohol syndrome to be impaired.

Dr. Weiss described some of the studies on diet and hyperactivity which were conducted in the 1970's. One of the biggest errors in evaluating the studies was to lump all of the children in the study together and consider their behavior as a group. If you look individually at each child the results are quite dramatic, but as a group they are not.

Another mistake critics make is to discount the importance of the fact that the youngest children are the most dramatically affected by food additives, etc. This is the very population we should be monitoring, the young child is like the little canary brought into the coal mine, whose vulnerability is a warning to the miners.

In summing up his concern for the effects of substances in our food and environment, Dr. Weiss quoted a scientist at the National Institutes of Health

"Suppose Thalidomide, instead of causing the birth of children with missing limbs, had instead reduced their intellectual potential by 10%. Would we ever be aware of the potent toxicity of the drug?"

New Convenience Meals for Adults

Several years ago Mary Ann Jackson founded a company to provide nourishing additive-free meals for young children. She called the product "My Own Meals."

The decision to offer foods without the usual synthetic chemicals was not based upon a philosophy, but was strictly a business decision; she felt there was a significant need for such a product and that this was not being filled by other companies.

Her analysis of the market was correct. People will go out of their way to have a product made from wholesome ingredients, and her company has enjoyed a steady growth. Now My Own Meals has developed a line of products for adults, and in addition to being free of unsavory additives, they are also kosher. Since the meals are "shelf stable" (do not require freezing or refrigeration and can be heated in boiling water or microwaved) they were provided for Jewish soliders in Somalia in place of the infamous Army MRE's.



Feingold moms have found My Own Meals to be a wonderful help when they need a quick meal, to send with a child to camp or on a visit. To learn more about ordering, and the location of retail stores carrying My Own Meals, call (708) 948-1118 or write to the company at 400 Lake Cook Road, Suite 107, Deerfield, IL 60015.

The following My Own Meals can be used on the Feingold Program:

Stage 1:

My Kind of Chicken
Chicken Please
Chicken & Noodles

Product Alert

Pathmark Natural Gelatin Capsules now contain BHA/BHT/TBHQ in the oil.

Pathmark is a supermarket chain located in the Northeast.

Co-op Soybean Margarine is now being manufactured by a different company.

The FAUS Product Information Committee has learned that the vitamin A Palmitate used in the margarine contains the antioxidant BHA.

Stage 2:

Beef Stew
Old World Stew
My Own Tortellini
Chicken & Black Beans
Chicken Mediterranean
Cheese Tortellini
Florentine Lasagna

Eating out in South Florida

Our Rebecca is doing miraculously well here (in North Miami Beach). The clean air and proximity to the ocean is working wonders. The natural food scene in South Florida is doing wonders for me.

We have at least six restaurants within 15 - 20 minutes of us which serve only natural food. When we first got here all we wanted to do was eat out. What a luxury. We have elegant (Unicorn Village), macro (Grainary), fast food (Papayas), juice bar, delis, supermarkets (yes!), kosher-natural (Sara's), bakeries (all natural, chocolate fudge decorated birthday cakes), you name it. My husband even has a natural food franchise as a client. (He's a marketing consultant.)

As always, I would love to be a program assistant since I enjoy seeing other people succeed as we have. You can also give my number to anyone traveling to South Florida or let people know about the following:

Unicorn Village, Waterways Blvd., 207th Street, North Miami Beach, 33280 - Yes! an all-natural mall— with

supermarket, bakery, deli, boutique, elegant waterfront restaurant that is as pure as pure can be. Must be seen to believe. I saw this place and rented the closest house I could. If I had more money I'd never cook again!

Oak Feed, Coconut Grove, Miami - all natural nouveau French. Tres fancy, elegant, wonderful but pricey. Welcomes kids.

Grainary, Deerfield Beach, - Macro-neurotic but excellent. Saturday \$8.95 all-you-can-eat buffet (with kids under 12 free) is lots of fun.

Bread of Life, 163rd & 6th Avenue, N. Miami Beach - Fast food! Lunch and dinner for under \$5. They grow their own ingredients.

Wholly Natural, West Palm Beach - Good food!

Here's to Your Health, Plantation - Pure, good take-out.

The list could go on and on. There are also resorts and spas and caterers and natural food delivery services. The Miami area could be the perfect place for a Feingold vacation. We do have all the advantages of a major city and the best beach in the world too (and the worst baseball team). We all know it isn't a vacation if you have to cook!

Feingold members wanting help are invited to write or call. You'll probably be able to reach me between meals.

Renee Leavy-Kohn
17930 NE 10th Avenue
North Miami, FL 33262
(305) 770-1616



The Feingold® Associations do not endorse, approve or assume responsibility for any product, brand, method or treatment. The presence (or absence) of a product on a Feingold foodlist, or the discussion of a method or treatment does not constitute approval (or disapproval). The foodlists are based primarily upon information supplied by manufacturers, and are not based upon independent testing.

A radio show that needs to know...about us!

Focus on the Family, hosted by Dr. James Dobson, is the second largest nationally syndicated radio show in America, reaching several million listeners.

Earlier this year the show devoted several days to proponents of drug therapy for A.D.D. children, with no mention of diet as an alternative.

Although numerous Feingold members have tried many times to interest Dr. Dobson in doing a show on our program, none have succeeded. (Dr. Dobson did have one show many years ago in which he interviewed Dr. John Taylor, who spoke favorably about the Feingold Program.)

You may be able to reach the staff at Focus on the Family with your personal comments on the help the Feingold Program has provided for your family. Both Dr. Dobson and the many families he reaches need to know about the "better way" to help ADD children and their families. Please take a moment to jot down your comments on the enclosed letter and send it to:

Dr. James Dobson
Focus on the Family
P.O. Box 35500
Colorado Springs, CO 80935-3550

Pudding-Lovers

Kozy Shack puddings have long been enjoyed by Feingolders in the Northeast. They come in several flavors and are now available in some other areas of the country.

In San Francisco, check out Lucky's, Von's, and the Price Club.

Publix in Florida carries Kozy Shack.

Giant Food in Washington and Baltimore should have the individual cups.

The product should be available in Georgia, as well as Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York.

When you shop in club stores (Sam's, Pace, Costco, Price Club, BJ's) look for Kozy Shack in the large 4 pound trays.

For more information, you can contact Kozy Shack at 161 Second Street, Mineola, NY 11501 (516) 746-4000.

Social Skills Workshop

FAUS President, Pat Palmer, gave a presentation at our annual conference that covered the essential aspects of "dyssemia", a term for social skills deficits. Pat explained the major characteristics of the various deficits and described steps parents and teachers can take to assist the dyssemic child.

She was assisted by two young actresses, Kori and Shira, students at the Laguardia High School for the Performing Arts in New York.



Thank You!

FAUS is grateful to the following companies who donated products to the delegates and guests attending our 18th annual conference:

Adam & Eve juices
Baldwin Hill Bakery
Banfi Wines
Colombo Yogurt
Dutch Mill Doughnuts
Kozy Shack Puddings
Elmhurst Dairy
Food For Life
Frookies Cookies
Haagen Dazs Ice Cream
King Kullen
Kiss My Face
Lender's Bagels
Newman's Own
New Morning
Snyder's of Hanover
Tom's of Maine
Vermont Country Maple
Weetabix

Grateful (hungry) delegates enjoyed all the good food.

Dear Members:

FAUS is interested in learning if we have any members with expertise in grants, fund-raising, and development. Please contact the Association at (703) 768-3287.

Amanda Hackett, Chairman of the FAUS Cultural and Economic Outreach Committee, is looking for someone who is interested in donating a small amount of time to help.

To learn more, contact Amanda at 17 Belinda Drive, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

FAUS Elects Officers and Board of Directors

The following volunteers have been elected for the 1993 - 1994 year.

Officers

President: Patricia Palmer
1st Vice President: Lea English
2nd Vice President: Sarah Roley
Recording Secretary: Dee Heinrich
Treasurer: Leslie Fowler

Standing Committees

Bylaws: Gail Wachsmuth
Conference: Christina Christianson
Member Education: Barbara Keele
Product Information: Lois Miele
Nominating: Markey Dokken & Lynn Murphy
Trademark/Copyright: Tanya Small
Publicity: Judy Schneider

Pure Facts

Editor: Jane Hersey
Contributing to this issue:
Colleen Smethers
Renee Leavy-Kohn
Barbara Keele
Debbie Jackson
Pat Palmer

Pure Facts is published ten times a year and is a portion of the material provided to members of the Feingold Association of the United States.

For more information contact FAUS, P.O. Box 6550, Alexandria, VA 22306 (703) 768-FAUS.