



Hosted by Deanna Minich, PhD, in
collaboration with



A Healthy Start: Simple Ways to Safely Detox Our Kids

By Lynise Perry

We live in a world laden with toxins in our body-care products, homes, food, air, and water. These products are often marketed as staples in and outside of the home as safe, effective, convenient, and good for you. Many inflammatory conditions in adults are associated with toxicity overload and the body's inability to clear out the toxins efficiently such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. In children, whose bodies are still fairly new and sensitive to this environment are bombarded with toxins even before birth through their parents' genetics, lifestyle, and eating habits.

Upon arriving, parents are encouraged to vaccinate immediately after birth and thereafter at a rate more frequently than children 20 years ago. Compound this with cleverly marketed processed baby formulas and foods, which have replaced nutrient dense breast milk and home-made baby foods, our children get off to a start that promotes disease more than wellness. Through our understanding of the gut-brain connection, we know that we eat and how we behave are closely connected. It is no wonder that due to the overexposure of toxins in food and the environment as well as the lack of being well-nourished pre-birth, the rate of children diagnosed with Autism, asthma, eczema, allergies, ADHD with other childhood neurological conditions and developmental delays, food sensitivities, concentration and behavioral issues have skyrocketed. So you may ask, how can a growing child go through a detox and it be safe and effective. I think it's all in how you see the detoxification process. Wouldn't it be great to live in a world devoid of preventable diseases and illnesses, where our children are happy and healthy thriving in wellness? Well I, along with many others, believe that this no ideal but very attainable and within our reach by collectively creating a healthy lifestyle and diet that restores, builds and nourishes the whole self.

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While many adults will go without food during a detox or cleanse this approach is very dangerous for a growing child whose nutrient needs may exceed our own to meet the demands of a constantly changing and developing body. So here are a few simple ways we can all get our kids on a healthy start.

Read Labels

Processed foods and body care products are a large market where our children are exposed to toxins due to exposure to epithelial cells on both the skin and intestinal wall which warrants easy access to the bloodstream. You may ask then, where to begin but this step is much easier than you may think. The best way to keep exposure of toxins at a low is to avoid them. This may require more reading of labels but the short moments it takes to read a label could be making a huge difference in your child's health. Below is a list of compounds commonly found in food, medication, toiletries, and art supplies:

- Synthetic/artificial colors: FD&C colors
- Synthetic/artificial flavors: Vanillin
- Petroleum derivatives: BHA, BHT, TBHQ (often found in boxed cereals)
- Natural flavorings
- Salicylates
- MSG
- Sulfites
- Benzoates
- Perfumes
- Nitrates, nitrites (often found in hot dogs and other deli meats)
- Corn syrup (made from hydrogen sulfide and cornstarch).

*This list was derived from:

Compart, P. J., & Laake, D. (2009). The kid-friendly ADHD and autism cookbook: The guide to the gluten-free, casein-free diet (2nd ed.). Beverly, MA: Fair Winds Press.



According to the FDA, a product claiming 0g of trans fats can have up to a gram in it. To be sure the product has no trans fats look for partially hydrogenated vegetable oils or vegetable shortening in the ingredient list.



North America's only independent verification for products made according to best practices for GMO avoidance. They are a non-profit organization.



95% of the ingredients listed must be organically grown. In December 2005, the 2006 agricultural appropriations bill was passed allowing 38 synthetic ingredients to be used in organic foods.



Administered by The Vegan Awareness Foundation (aka Vegan Action), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Does not contain ingredients from animals and ingredients have not been tested on animals.



GFCO's (Gluten-Free Certification Organization) Scientific and Professional Board review the practices of GFCO. GFCO inspects products and manufacturing facilities for gluten. The mark assures that the finished product contains less than 10 ppm gluten (5 ppm gluten).

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Eat Clean

The best way to eliminate those harsh compounds in pre-packaged and prepared foods is to avoid them altogether. Minimize those foods by first choosing not to buy them and second creating whole foods alternatives. It may sound like it's easier said than done but from the perspective of a very busy single parent, believe me, it can be done with just a little preparation and planning, it can be easy and even fun also. It starts with planning your trip to the grocery store and ends with preparation and meal planning. First, your grocery list will have staple whole foods that you cook often. These foods are usually found on the periphery of the grocery store and allow you to avoid the aisles mostly populated with processed, prepackaged foods. A good rule of thumb in knowing if a food is whole or not is the rate at which it spoils. The quicker it spoils the more digestible and gut friendly it will be for your children. Also the more recognizable it is to its original form in nature, the more adapted our body is to digest, absorb, and metabolize it. Shopping the periphery with you child also helps in avoiding aisles that may tempt a sweet tooth or a salty snack cruncher. This is also a great time to bond with your child as well as educate them on the variety of fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds and teaching them the art of exploratory eating in trying new exotic foods. This is a great way to help ease the transition of replacing many of those snacks in the aisles that aren't so great for them.



When possible it is best to shop whole, organic and local vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, legumes, grains, and grass fed/ grass finished meats and poultry as well as wild caught cold water fish. These foods are of optimal choice because they either have never or in a very limited way been exposed to harsh pesticides and herbicides which can obliterate beneficial gut bacteria essential for optimal digestion and immunity. Supplementing your child's diet with natural probiotics such fermented food (sauerkraut, kombucha, kimchi) will repopulate the gut and aid in digestion and ultimate gut health. Add this with consuming prebiotics, or foods high in soluble and insoluble fibers such as fruits, vegetables, and legumes, and you will be creating

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and assisting in developing a livable environment for those beneficial bacteria to thrive as well as speeding up bowel transit time creating less space and time to reabsorb toxins meant to be eliminated back into the bloodstream via the colon.

Lastly it is also a good idea to eliminate common food allergens. Food allergies and sensitivities are also associated with many childhood neurological, immunological, and digestive issues. Many times, simply doing an elimination diet for a short period can have a big improvement on a child's overall wellness including alleviating any major complaints with behavior, frequent infections, as well as, digestive discomfort and issues. Here is a general chart to get you started that was derived from the elimination plan of the Institute of Functional Medicine.

Wheat/Gluten Substitutes	Dairy/Milk Substitutes
Brown rice, rice products	Nut milks/milk products
Quinoa	Hemp milk/milk products
Buckwheat	Coconut yogurt
Millet	Ghee (not dairy free but casein free)
Gluten-free Oats	Oat milk/milk products
Gluten free flours	Rice milk/milk products
Teff	Coconut kefir

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Fruits and Vegetables: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/aryaziai/8550034051/> via photopin.com

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