Why Multivitamins and Minerals are Important for Those With ADHD

by DR. DONNA

ADHD Vitamins and Minerals

Ever had a child who was a picky eater? What about a child with ADHD who was a picky eater? If so, you should know that a picky eater is unknowingly inducing vitamin and mineral deficiencies that may be causing behavior problems that look like ADHD.

For example, let's look at the big picture of nutrients – the ones called macronutrients. These are protein, fat and carbohydrates. A deficiency of fat and/or protein causes stunted growth, skin problems, poor concentration and an inability to focus.

Then there are the individual nutrients called micronutrients – the vitamins and minerals. For example, a vitamin B5 (pantothenic acid) deficiency causes restlessness and an inability to deal with stress. PABA deficiency causes irritability and nervousness. Vitamin B6 deficiency causes nervousness, as does vitamin B12 deficiency. Biotin deficiency causes muscle pain and poor appetite. Folic acid and boron deficiencies cause poor memory.

More Deficiencies That Can Mimic ADHD Symptoms

Here's a chart with some additional deficiencies:

Nutrient in Deficiency	What Symptoms It Causes
Calcium	Back and leg pain, insomnia, irritability, depression
Magnesium	Nervousness, muscular excitability, depression
Phosphorus	Loss of weight, loss of appetite, fatigue, nervous disorders
Potassium	Nervous disorders, irregular pulse, insomnia
Zinc	Loss of taste and appetite, stretch marks
Molybdenum	Allergies, anxiety disorders
Selenium	Environmental sensitivity, cancer
Most B Vitamins	Digestive disorders

Where to Find the Children's Required Nutrient Levels

Children's recommended nutrient allowance requirements vary depending on their age, so we can't include a one-size-fits-all chart here. This web page called Integrative DRI for Healthcare Professionals will be able to give you these requirements in detail.

On this page, you'll check off your child's stats:

- Male/female.
- Age.
- Height/weight.

- Activity.
- Body mass index or daily calorie needs (choose daily calorie needs).
- Macronutrients (check all).
- Vitamins (check all).
- Minerals (check all).

This allows you to customize the needs of each of your children, which is the most important step in nutrition. You need not be a healthcare professional to use this handy calculating tool, yet you do need information that healthcare professionals have access to.

Steps for What to Do for Your Child with ADHD

Step one for your child is to realize that your child may have vitamin and mineral deficiencies related to his or her symptoms.

Step two is to get your child with ADHD's present vitamins and minerals out of the cabinet so you can compare them to the right amount that health professionals will recommend.

Step three is to go to the link above and collect the information for all your children, not just the ones with ADHD.

Step four is to start selecting the right supplements that match what your child needs. Don't compromise on them; if the supplements don't have enough biotin in them as well as folic acid and vitamin C, then keep looking. Always remember that whatever nutrient is missing in the formulations on the market is a nutrient your child will end up in deficiency status.

Keep looking for the right formula. But also note that when you do find one, your child's needs for vitamins and minerals will change as his or her age changes. If your child is 6 now, obviously your child's nutrient requirements will be different when he or she is a teenager. You can find out more info on this at the same link provided above.

Step five is to start a log of your child's symptoms of ADHD and make it a game to see how long it takes for your child to improve. Expect the best.