Why You Should Consider Adding Essential Fat Supplements If You Have ADHD

by DR. DONNA

Omega Supplements for ADHD

What do many of the symptoms of ADHD have in common with nutritional disorders? They are consistent with an omega-3 deficiency.

How Symptoms of ADHD Point to an Omega-3 Deficiency

Restlessness is a sign that something is not right in the nervous system. Difficulty focusing is also a sign that the nervous system is off-kilter. Poor impulse control is another sign that something is going on in the nervous system that should not be occurring. Overactivity is a clear sign of the nervous system in need of help.

Omega-3 fats impact the nervous system directly, and in the case of a deficiency, these are some of the clear symptoms:

- Temper tantrums (one study found that boys with temper tantrums and sleep disturbances were more likely to have low levels of omega-3 fats.)
- Memory loss or poor memory
- Vision and nerve problems in infants
- Dry skin
- Poor circulation
- Depression
- Mood swings
- Sleep disturbances
- Eczema
- Dry eyes
- Fatigue
- Joint pain

Don’t Blame Yourself!

The problem isn’t that you’re a bad parent and the evil ogre who didn’t feed your child right in the first place, so don’t go into a blame and shame mode. The real problem is that the diet of most Americans contains up to 25 times more omega-6 fats than omega-3 fats. This imbalance leads to a deficiency.

Once cows were packed into the feeding stalls and were given grains instead of letting them choose their food out in the field of high omega-3 grasses, we inadvertently changed the composition of the fats in the meat.

Where Are Healthy Fats Found in the Diet?

Dietary sources of omega-3s include salmon, halibut, and sardines, and it's easier for some children to take a good-tasting omega-3 fat supplement in liquid form.

There are other essential fats in the diet that children with ADHD need to feed their nervous system properly. One of them is called GLA for short; gamma-Linolenic acid is the scientific term. GLA stimulates skin and hair growth. GLA is actually an omega-6 fatty acid, but it is one we need in the body. Foods with GLA include borage oil, black currant seed oil and evening primrose oil.

Get the Essential Fats Right

One of the most important things you can do for children with ADHD is to get the fats in their diet right. If you don't want to simply make dietary changes and see what happens, then do check around to see what nutritionists in your area can run a fat panel test on your child. The fat panel test will tell what is going on in the body with all the fats, not just the omega-6 fats and omega-3 fats. It will also check for the medium chain fats, such as those found in coconut and coconut oil.

Putting the right types of fats into the diet means eliminating some of the bad fats. These bad fats include hydrogenated fats, trans fats, and most vegetable oils. Olive oil is fine to use, but canola and the others must go. Throw them out; they are far too high in omega-6 fats and depleting your child's omega-3 fats.

Here's a list of supplements that may help your child with ADHD:

- Omega-3 supplement with up to 600 mg EPA and at least 200 mg DHA
- 1 handful raw walnuts daily
- 1 tablespoon ground flaxseed daily
- 60-100 mg GLA (may be found in evening primrose oil)

Try this with your child for 90 days. Give your child's body some time to begin changing the types of fats and watch what happens to the ADHD symptoms.