

The Feingold Program

“Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips. Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, ...And do not let me eat of their delicacies.” Psalm 141:3, 4

“How carefully should mothers study and prepare their tables with the most simple, healthful food, that the digestive organs may not be weakened, the nervous forces unbalanced, and the instruction which they should give their children counteracted by the food placed before them.” Testimonies, vol. 3, page 568.

There are seven to twelve million so-called hyperactive/learning disabled (H-LD) children in the United States. If properly homeschooled—that is, not pushing heavy academics on such a child at an early age—many of the H-LD symptoms that are really due to a lack of maturity are not manifested.

Homeschoolers Have an Advantage

Another benefit of not attending an institution is that the child can avoid daily exposure to environmental chemicals to which he may be sensitive, such as bus fumes, teachers' colognes, certain types of glues, paints, felt-tipped pens, and industrial cleaning compounds that are frequently used in schools. And that's not to mention additive-laden school cafeteria food, vending machines, and snacks served at class parties! It is also fortunate that many homeschooling families, especially Adventist, are very health-conscious and natural foods oriented. By limiting (or eliminating) sugars, for example, they deliberately or unknowingly avoid many of the chemical additives that aggravate H-LD symptoms.

When There Are Still Problems

Still, there are a remaining few parents who have done everything “right”—home birthing, breastfeeding, vegetarian diet, homeschooling, practicing consistent Christian discipline—and H-LD still persists. In addition to the hyperactivity, there may be compulsive aggression, impulsive behavior, impatience, short attention span, poor sleep patterns, and even physical and neuro-muscular disorders.

Many parents are vaguely aware that artificial colors, flavors, and preservatives, as well as excess sugar, should be avoided; and so they read labels religiously before buying any processed food product. What

most do NOT know is that label-reading is not always reliable because federal labeling requirements are inconsistent. Some secondary ingredients are not required to be listed. Sometimes the wording on a label can be deceiving (such as the word "natural" in the brand name of a product containing artificial ingredients!). They boast "NO PRESERVATIVES" without telling you about the artificial flavors and colors. Another complication is that some children are sensitive even to specific chemicals called salicylates that occur naturally in unprocessed foods. This is where the Feingold Program can help.

Food and Medication Lists

Probably FAUS's most helpful service is their constant researching of food products and the publication of a continuously updated *Food List* which lists, by brand name, products which have been determined to be free of the offending additives. A separate *Medication List* provides information to pharmacists, physicians, and Feingold members. It lists prescription and over-the-counter medications known to be free of synthetic colors, flavors, BHA, BHT, and TBHQ. A monthly newsletter, *Pure Facts*, also keeps members informed on current news regarding food products, plus ideas and success stories.

Implementing the Program

The Feingold Handbook gives a step-by-step guide for using the Program, which is both a test and a method of treatment. It is based upon an elimination diet composed of two stages which eliminate artificial colorings, flavorings and preservatives--BHA, BHT, TBHQ.

Books and a Video

FAUS also has a 21-minute video, *Impossible Kids? Possible Answers!* Feingold members, non-member educators and health-care professionals can obtain a "Teacher's Professional Packet" or "Doctor's Professional Packet," containing documented studies from professional journals. Check in your local public library for Dr. Feingold's book, *Why Your Child Is Hyperactive*, *The Feingold Cookbook* and *Why Can't My Child Behave?* (these books have been placed in libraries by volunteers.)

Some Myths and Facts

There is a common misconception of well-intentioned but misinformed relatives and friends that "just a little bit won't hurt." Not true! One bite of a red Veje-link is just as bad as eating the whole can.

Another myth is that kids will “outgrow” hyperactivity. Again—not true! The experts tell us that H-LD merely takes on different forms in puberty, adolescence, and adulthood. In fact, there are many adults “on the Diet” for conditions ranging from headaches to sleep apnea.

Challenges for Adventists

A challenge unique to Adventist vegetarian Feingolders is finding meat and dairy analogs that are “okay.” In general, Adventist Feingolders have learned to avoid Worthington products, because most contain artificial ingredients, except for some of the “Natural Touch” line. They have found that many of the Millstone and Cedar Lake products were acceptable, also some of the Loma Linda.

If you were to *very strictly* follow a Weimar, Uchee Pines, or Hallelujah Acres type of diet (which some prefer to call “God’s Eden diet”), and if you know your child is not sensitive to any salicylate foods, you would have much less need for Feingold. Actually, any diet that eliminates all food components—both artificial and natural—that cause undesirable physical, emotional, or behavioral reactions in your child *is* a Feingold Diet, in the broadest sense.

However, if you use ANY processed foods—even soy/tofu milk—you need to know what’s been added to it. In reality, I have not known anyone who used absolutely NO processed foods. If it comes in a jar, bottle, can, box, bag, or barrel—take time to find out exactly what’s in it.

Remember this: For many families, the Feingold Program has been one of God’s direct answers to their needs. They say they could never have survived homeschooling without it.

Adventists Who Can Help

The Feingold concept is strongly supported by Drs. Calvin and Agatha Thrash, two of the most respected SDA physicians we know. Another SDA Feingolder is the renown Lawrence Maxwell, a former editor of Primary Treasure.

To find out if there is a Feingold volunteer in your area, or to request membership information, you can write or call: Feingold Association of the United States, 127 E. Main St. #106, Riverhead, NY 11901; (800) 321-3287; www.feingold.org

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