



DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY RESOURCES

The ONE Resource Network Integrating Conventional & Holistic Approaches



*Western Psychological Services:
Pioneer in Sensory Integration*

This newsletter is made possible by a grant from Western Psychological Services, Los Angeles, California

Educators, therapists, and parents now recognize sensory integrative dysfunction as a developmental disorder they can observe, document, evaluate, and treat. That was not always the case. In the 1970s, when Dr. A. Jean Ayres formulated her theory of sensory integration, she faced the skepticism that often greets new ideas. She discovered the only way to demonstrate the existence of sensory integrative dysfunction was through objective research.

Ayres found support for her efforts at **Western Psychological Services (WPS)**. While many companies now offer sensory integration resources, **WPS** was there at the beginning, and we're still here now. **WPS** offers groundbreaking sensory books and assessments, provides training, and is nurturing a new generation of researchers and clinicians who are building on the Ayres' legacy.

Continuing our commitment to developing leading sensory assessments, **WPS** is proud to announce the February 2007 release of the **Sensory Processing Measure (SPM)**. This exciting new assessment gives teachers, parents, and therapists a complete picture of children's sensory processing difficulties. The **SPM** consists of three forms: the Home Form, the Main Classroom Form, and the School Environments Form. The **SPM** involves parents, teachers, and other school personnel in the assessment process, as they contribute information and learn about sensory problems. Comprehensive yet detailed, the **SPM's** unique multi-environment approach gives an accurate and differentiated picture of children's sensory processing difficulties.

Use the **SPM** with children 5-12 to:

- **Collect** valuable information about vision, hearing, taste and smell, touch, balance, and body position sense;
- **Assess and compare** sensory functioning across seven different elementary school environments and at home;
- **Evaluate** sensory systems, social participation, and praxis.

Visit <www.sensoryprocessingmeasure.com>.

Looking for the best resource to learn about sensory integration? **WPS's** revised and updated **Sensory Integration and the Child: 25th Anniversary Edition**, explains sensory integrative dysfunction, how to recognize it, and what to do about it. This parent-friendly edition features helpful tips, checklists, and question-and-answer sections. The book is indispensable reading for parents and an excellent way to improve communication between therapists, parents, and teachers. See enclosed booklist to order.

WPS is also the home of the **Sensory Integration and Praxis Tests (SIPT)**, the "gold standard" for evaluating sensory integration and praxis functions. The product of extensive research and clinical testing by Dr. Ayres, the **SIPT** is the most efficient and psychometrically sophisticated way to sample sensory skills and functions in children from 4 through 8 years of age. Composed of 17 brief tests, the **SIPT** measures fine and gross motor skills, visual perception, visual motor skills, auditory-language and praxis abilities, as well as tactile, vestibular, and proprioceptive functioning and compares them to expectations for a given age group. It pinpoints specific sensory problems associated with disabilities such as attention deficits, autism, and learning disabilities, by showing how children organize and respond to different types of sensory input.

WPS offers the **USC/WPS Comprehensive Program in Sensory Integration**, the most thorough and practical sensory integration training in the world. Taught by world-renowned instructors and featuring demonstrations with real children, this four-course series is based on scientific evidence and covers sensory integration theory, assessment, interpretation, and intervention.

For more information about these and other sensory integration resources please visit <www.wpspublish.com> or call 800.648.8857. **Western Psychological Services** thanks **DDR** for the opportunity to support this newsletter.

IN THIS ISSUE	
Western Psychological Services	Page 1
Executive Director's Column	Page 2
Parasites: The Elephant in the Middle of the Room	
News and Comments	Page 3
Herbs	Page 4
Herbal Medicine for Children	
Sensory	Page 5
Beanbags for Fun	
Homeopathy	Page 6
Parasites	
Nutrition	Page 7
Impacting Low Muscle Tone	
Upcoming Events	Page 8

Executive Director's Column

by Patricia S. Lemer, M.Ed., NCC, M.S. Bus.



Parasites: The Elephant in the Middle of the Room

Blood in the stool! It's really frightening, especially with a family history of colon cancer. At first I thought it was remnants of beets. A colonoscopy showed no abnormalities, not even a tiny polyp. I eliminated wheat and dairy. No change. As my symptoms gradually worsened, I made an appointment with Pittsburgh's "best" GI specialist.

The GI Connection: The candy in the waiting room and the intake with not one query about diet should have been fair warning. Dr. GI requested a stool test. "I did one two weeks ago with a top lab; the results will be back soon," I said, expecting him to be impressed. "Why'd you do that, honey?" he asked kindly. "We have a great lab down the street." I explained that mine could identify all types of bacteria and bugs. "We're only interested in the big, bad guys," he explained. The top lab test found no bad bugs, no parasites, no answers.

"What about food allergies?" I asked. "Honey," he explained patiently, "your colon is a machine. It doesn't matter what you eat. You are very depleted. What you need is calories: cake, cookies, ice cream." I thought to myself. "Can he really believe that?"

The nice doctor did me the favor of ordering blood work. Maybe I was anemic. I wasn't. However, the results offered the first clue: elevated eosinophils, a type of white blood cell. High levels occur in asthma, viral infections, and...to fight parasites. My level of 1000 was twice the high end of normal. He also wanted to repeat the year old colonoscopy; maybe the first doctor missed something. "I need to look at inflammation, so I know which steroid to give you," he answered. "What if I'm not interested in steroids?" He looked at me with annoyance, and told me what I'd known since I walked in the door. "Honey, you're in the wrong office."

Fortunately, I soon traveled to Seattle for the DAN! conference, and saw Dietrich Klinghardt, MD, Ph.D. He perused my lab work, and said immediately, "You have parasites. Eosinophil levels this high always mean parasites, which rarely show up on even the best stool tests. Labs use microscopes to look for bugs. That's like looking for an elephant with a magnifying glass. You miss the elephant."

The Respiratory Connection: Klinghardt listened to my wheezing and unproductive cough. "That asthmatic like cough could also signal parasites," he said. "It shows up when the larvae go to the lungs." I wish the doctor who had diagnosed my "asthma" a while ago had known that!

The Energy Connection: Klinghardt evaluated me using his autonomic response testing (ART). He tested my body's vibrations against samples of many varieties of parasites, and then against their sound vibrations. In about 15 minutes he had identified which roundworms, amoebas, and protozoa I was hosting, and what antidotes were best for me. Then, he explained how my history had set up the perfect parasite paradise, how parasites block nutrient absorption, inflame the gut, hold onto heavy metals, trigger yeast overgrowth, and cause weight gain.

The Dental Connection: My fourth wisdom tooth has never emerged, and for my whole life, has been imbedded between the roots of my first molar. Although several dentists had found that "migrated tooth" interesting, none had seen the need to disturb it. "Too bad," Klinghardt said, "the first molar is linked to the large intestine. That's a key piece to your puzzle."

That molar was my first tooth to break and require attention. He went on. "The wandering tooth made mischief by living nearby." When half of the tooth broke off 25 years ago, I ignorantly allowed my dentist to rebuild the missing part with mercury amalgam. That mercury sat on my large intestine tooth until the rest of the tooth broke away. When the tooth was crowned, my fate was sealed. The mercury-filled molar and the large intestine became a team. Both the organ and the foundation of the tooth are now inflamed. A complete treatment program will have to address the large intestine, the crowned tooth, as well as that pesky fourth wisdom tooth that migrated.

The Time Connection: My bowel "episodes" occur like clockwork between five and seven a.m. Klinghardt explained that each organ has a two hour period when it is most active. Large intestine time coincides with my early morning symptoms. To see a Meridian Flow Wheel, see Donna Eden's *Energy Medicine*.

The Obesity Connection: Klinghardt explained that when parasites take up residence in the body, they suck out good nutrients leaving their toxic byproducts, which slow down digestive function, leading to fatigue and obesity. I had fed them, not myself, very well with my organic diet. Many people, like me, who have difficulty losing weight with sensible diets and exercise, have undiagnosed parasites.

The Skin Connection: "Any other symptoms?" he asked. "Well, I do have this chronic underarm rash," I said. "That's how your body is eliminating the parasites' toxins," he came back, without skipping a beat.

Putting the Pieces Together: Now it all fits: my obesity, dental issues, digestive, respiratory, and skin problems. Each of the blind men who incorrectly diagnosed individual symptoms in isolation, missed the elephant in the middle of the room. Unfortunately, eliminating my unwelcome guests will take months, maybe years. Complex treatment addresses the bugs, their toxic wastes, the heavy metals, dysbiosis, and inflammation. A "whole elephant" approach is necessary.

Go to page five to learn about Cindy Griffin and her team's experiences attacking parasites in those with autism. For more about Klinghardt's approach to diagnosis and treatment, go to <www.neuraltherapy.com>. Donna Eden's website <www.innersource.net> offers a wealth of material on energy medicine. Go also to <www.handoutbank.org>. Read Breiner's *Whole Body Dentistry* (see booklist) for appropriate dental practices.

Give DDR Memberships, Books and Digests as Gifts

Let DDR be your one-stop holiday shopping center. Honor teachers and therapists with a gift of membership. They can then be listed in the 2007 Networking Directory. Our huge selection of books offers suggestions for keeping kids with special needs happy and appropriate with great activities. Remember DDR in your end-of-year donations. We are a 501c3 not-for-profit and your donations are tax deductible. It's really easy. Go to <www.devdelay.org> and use PayPal, or if you'd rather, give us a call and we can help you make good choices.

New Sensory Products from Old Friends

Our occupational therapy friends have been busy! Congratulations to Diana Henry on her new book, *Sensory Tools for Pets: Animals and People Helping Each Other*. Diana highlights techniques that both work for pets, and use pets to help children and adults with sensory processing disorders. Mary Sue Williams and Sherry Shellenberger have just published *Test Drive*, a book and CD set introducing the Alert Program. This package is full of practical ideas and songs to support children's self-regulation. Aussie Gen Jereb has a great new CD *Jumpin' Jelly Beans* to get kids moving and learning body awareness. See the booklist for them all.

GF/CF Cookbooks For the Holidays

Searching for new ideas for the holidays? Dana Laake and Pam Compant's new cookbook, *The Kid-Friendly ADHD & Autism Cookbook* is the ultimate guide to the GF/CF diet. This unique book combines successful strategies for feeding picky eaters with kid-tested recipes. Extensive sources for ingredients are included. See "cookbooks" on the booklist for great gift ideas.

Board Changes

A thousand thanks to retiring DDR Board members Sanford Cohen, OD, Valerie DeJean, OTR, Rebecca Weissman, M.S., Susie Gellert, and newsletter editor, Anat Sichel. DDR could not have achieved so many accomplishments without them. Welcome to new members: Margaret Britt and Eileen Culhane, mothers, Michigan optometrist Bob Hohendorf, New York dietitian Laura Lagano, and speech language pathologist Andrea Rich, who resides in Canada. We look forward to working with you.

"New Developments" Needs an Editor

Are you a wordsmith? A stickler for grammar? Hate the passive voice? Want to be the first to learn the latest in nutrition and sensory therapies? Have some free time to volunteer as DDR's newsletter editor? While not lucrative, writing for DDR's newsletter is fun and educational. If you fit the description, let us hear from you.

Join DDR Committees

If you have skills you would like to use to benefit DDR, you are invited to join one of our ongoing Committees: Program, Finance, Fund-raising, Newsletter, Long-Range Planning, Technology, Membership, and Public Relations. Call or email the DDR office at devdelay@mindspring.com or 800.497.0944.



Creating Healthy Environments in NY

Join DDR for our exciting 2006-2007 lecture series in New York City. Speakers include William Spear on Feng Shui, Mindy Pennypacker and Paul McRandle from *The Green Guide* on healthy schools, Annie Bond on creating an environmentally healthy home, Annemarie Colbin on school lunches, Devra Davis on the battle against pollution, and Lindsey Biel on the sensory smart home and school. All are experts in their fields, and many are authors of best-selling books. See Upcoming Events for dates. DDR is grateful to Lifespire for the use of their beautiful conference room in the Empire State Building for these informative programs.

Mirror Neurons and Autism

November's *Scientific American* reports that those with autism may struggle with social interactions because their mirror neurons are not functioning properly. The function of mirror neurons, a special class of cells in the brain is to mediate our ability to mimic, learn, and understand the actions and intentions of others: precisely the skills that are lacking in autism. While giving the article an 'A' for scientific merit, ARI's Bernie Rimland graded it "failing" for devoting only a single line to the possibility of biomedical treatment, and suggesting Ecstasy, a street drug for autism treatment. What about sensory treatments? Could occupational, vision, and auditory therapies also increase function of mirror neurons, leading to improved function?

"No" to the HPV Vaccine

The CDC wants all nine to twelve year old girls to receive three doses of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, supposed to prevent infection from the sexually transmitted viruses that can cause genital warts and cervical cancer. The only way girls can become infected is to be sexually active and to refuse pap smears. DDR joins the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC) in opposing this mandate. The HPV vaccine was tested in only about 100 nine year old girls, and follow-up continued for only 18 months. Is this another incidence of the government giving drug companies profits rather than assuring that new vaccines are safe, and necessary? To read NVIC's press release about how dangerous HPV could be for all nine year old girls, go to <www.nvic.org>.

Lorna Jean King's Death a Huge Loss

DDR mourns the passing of sensory integration pioneer Lorna Jean King. The notice of her death reached us as this newsletter was going to press. She was one of the first members of our Professional Advisory Board. See the Winter edition for a tribute to her.

New Developments is a quarterly newsletter published by **Developmental Delay Resources (DDR)**, a 501c3 not-for-profit organization whose mission is connecting families, professionals, and organizations and disseminating the most current information about possible causes, interventions, and preventions for developmental delays. Members of DDR support the inter-relationship of physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development in children whose delays include, but are not limited to, sensory-motor deficits, speech-language disorders, attention deficits, learning disabilities, pervasive developmental disorders, and autism. DDR seeks to educate the public about treatments that: address sensory-motor processing, including occupational therapy, vision therapy, auditory training, and perceptual-motor therapy; boost the immune system, including dietary modification, nutritional supplementation, homeopathy, and detoxification; address structural integrity, including osteopathy, CranioSacral therapy, and chiropractic; and encourage positive social-emotional relationships, such as communication therapies, FloorTime, and family therapy. **DDR is the only organization that integrates all these disciplines.**

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All material in **New Developments** is for information purposes only and is not to be substituted for professional advice from your health care provider.

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Herbal Medicine for Children with Developmental Delays

by Laura I. Mezei, MHA

Today is an exciting and hopeful time for children with developmental delays. Parents and health care practitioners are getting an increasingly clear picture of what goes wrong biologically in autism and related disorders. The world of herbs abounds with rich gifts of healing for body, mind, and spirit.

What are Herbs?

Medicinal herbs are plants with healing properties used to prevent and treat illness. Herbalism is the most ancient form of medicine known to humans. Many of today's pharmaceuticals were originally derived from herbs. Herbs are very different from drugs. While drugs suppress symptoms, herbs support and enhance the body's own natural healing processes.

Which Systems Go Wrong?

These three main systems become disordered by toxins, viruses and bacteria:

- **Gastrointestinal system:** Yeast overgrowth and "autistic enterocolitis," a novel form of inflammatory bowel disease that correlates to a chronic, sub-acute measles virus in the intestines, are common problems. The overuse of antibiotics causes yeasts to proliferate and colonize the GI tract. Toxic chemicals from yeasts weaken and perforate the intestinal lining, leading to "leaky gut syndrome."
- **Immune system:** In autoimmune disease, the body attacks its own brain structures. Chronic sub-acute viral infections can also severely impede normal immune function.
- **Nervous system:** Demyelination of nerves affects learning, memory, communication, and social skills. Heavy metal toxicity can lead to sensory problems, repetitive motions, poor eye contact, loss of language, extremes of emotion, behavioral dysfunctions, sleep disturbances, and other issues.

Look to organic natural herbs once special diets and nutritional supplements are in place as part of the Defeat Autism Now! (DAN!) protocol.

Cleansing the Gastrointestinal System

Garlic or **Usnea**, both *antifungals*, are an effective first line of defense against yeast overgrowth. For repairing intestinal permeability look to demulcent herbs such as **Slippery Elm** and **Marshmallow Root** and to mucosal regeneratives such as **Licorice** or **Chamomile**. They soothe, regenerate, and repair the ragged and inflamed tissue of the mucosal lining.

Treatment of enterocolitis involves targeting bowel pathogens and addressing constipation and/or diarrhea. To cleanse the area and eliminate pathogens use *anti-microbial* herbs such as **Bearberry**, *anti-inflammatory* herbs such as **Meadowsweet**, and *astringent* herbs such as **Agrimony**. For constipation use *laxative* herbs such as **Burdock** and **Buckthorn**. *Tannin-containing* herbs such as **Oak Bark** will stop diarrhea. To soothe the accompanying gas and cramping, try *anti-spasmodic* herbs such as **Fennel Seed** and **Cramp Bark**.

Targeting the Immune System

Use deep *immune-activating* tonic herbs such as **Astragalus** and **Shiitake** as *alternatives to antibiotics* when treating ear infections, colds, and fevers. Clear up sinus infections with *berberine-containing* herbs such as **Goldenseal**. **Thyme** is a powerful *antimicrobial* and *expectorant* that makes an excellent tea for sore throats. Use **mullein**, an *anti-inflammatory pain-reliever*, to make herbal ear drops. Battle chronic, sub-acute viruses with herbal *anti-virals* such as **Echinacea** and **Licorice**.

During chelation, support detoxification organs. The liver, kidneys, and lymphatic system must be able to excrete the toxins the chelating agents bind to and pull out. *Hepatic* herbs such as **Milk Thistle** and **Yellow Dock** tone and strengthen the liver and increase the flow of bile. *Diuretic/tonic* herbs such as **Dandelion Leaf** and **Horsetail** support the kidneys and *lymphatic tonics* such as **Cleavers** keep the lymph from stagnating and encourage drainage.

Calming the Nervous System

An astonishing array of *nervine* herbs are available to address behavioral dysfunctions. **Skullcap** helps reduce self-stimulatory behaviors, **Ginkgo** targets poor awareness and focus, and **Golden Root** is a vital part of a self-injury protocol.

Herbs ranging in strength from mild to quite strong in the form of *relaxants* such as **Lavender**, *sedatives* such as **Lemon Balm**, and *hypnotics* such as **Valerian** will quiet the body and bring on sleep.

Aromatherapy and **Flower Essences** are wonderful, supportive, complementary therapies that support all three systems of the triad. Use *essential oils*, with specific therapeutic actions and chemical properties, to assist in battling issues like yeast overgrowth and constipation, and in detoxification.

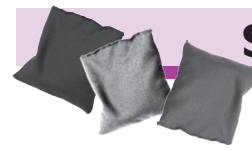
Flower essences are liquid extracts prepared from sun infusions of certain flowers. They heal and shift a variety of emotional states including anxiety, apathy, resistance, and extremes of emotion.

Reach for Herbs, Not Drugs

Explore herbal and other natural treatments from God's pharmacy. The best sources are small, herbalist-owned companies that grow organic plants, make their own medicines and products, and are environmentally conscious. Medicines made by hand using the whole herb are far superior to the herbal pills typically found in health food stores. Go online to Avena Botanicals, Jean's Greens, Mountain Rose, and Wise Woman. Consult a trained herbal professional for guidance about dosages and type, as both are unique to each individual. To learn more, read McIntyre's *The Herbal for Mother and Child*, and *The Complete Illustrated Herbal* by Hoffmann. (See booklist.)

Laura I. Mezei, MHA is a certified Herbalist, DAN! Practitioner, Aromatherapist, Flower Essence Practitioner, and Special Educator, specializing in treating children with autism. Contact her at *Blessed Birches Herbal Healing*, in New York City, info@blessed-birches.com and 212.879.8292.

Beanbags: Fun with a Purpose



Remember tossing beanbags into a bucket? At a target? Over a barrier? While video games and soccer practice have replaced these activities as “play,” many teachers, occupational therapists, Brain Gym specialists, and optometrists have rediscovered them as therapy. Why? Because beanbag games assist those of all ages to

- Develop body awareness, balance, and motor coordination;
- Integrate touch, movement, proprioception, kinesthesia, and vision;
- Enhance concentration and attention;
- Cross the body’s midline;
- Prepare the eyes and hands for reading and writing.

Basic Developmental Premises: When using beanbags, remember that children develop control over their large muscles before their smaller ones. First, they learn to control their necks and heads, then trunk and limbs, and finally hands, fingers, and eyes. Choose games appropriate for developmental age, not for chronological age.

Ideas abound for games to play with beanbags. Here are a few from some of our favorite practitioners.

Brendan O’Hara’s “Movement & Learning Beanbag Ditties”

This delightful Aussie is a Brain Gym expert, kinesiologist, and composer. His digeridoo and other native instruments enhance his music. Here are three of the 15 activities on the CD.

Round and Round My Tummy: In time to the music, transfer a beanbag from right hand to left hand and back again, below hip level, switching hands at the body’s midline front and back. Change directions, always finishing in a clockwise direction. For variation, do it facing a partner with two beanbags, timing movements so that beanbags are exchanged simultaneously on both sides without looking. Repeat standing back to back. This simple activity helps integrate the Moro, Plantar, Babinski, Asymmetric Tonic Neck, and Fear Paralysis reflexes.

Quiet Tigers: Get onto hands and knees. Pile one to four beanbags on the head. Rock and sway forwards, backwards, and sideways, balancing beanbags, while roaring quietly to music on the CD. Repeat, adding beanbags to back and hips. While balancing beanbags on head, back, and hips, follow an imaginary horizontal figure 8 with the eyes. Balance on one hand, and trace the 8 with the free hand. Change hands. Quiet tigers integrates the Symmetric Tonic Neck Reflex, develops the vestibular system and balance, enhances binocular vision, and coordinates balance, vision, and movement.

Spinal Twist: Get on hands and knees. Place beanbags on each hip and on sacrum. Look over one shoulder, observing the beanbags, and trying hard to bring the shoulders and hips very close together on each side, i.e., right shoulder to right hip, and left shoulder to left hip. Arms are firm, not stiff.

Repeat on other side. The “Spinal Twist” is an excellent activity for integrating the spinal gallant reflex, reducing bedwetting, and to help the “wiggle-worm” sit still.

O’Hara’s CD comes with two organic cotton handmade beanbags with rice inside. Their size and weight is perfect for young children. An insert in the CD illustrates moves for each track.

Donna Wendelburg’s “Begin Where They Are” & “Beanbags and Fun”

This amazing vision therapist has improved the lives of individuals with disabilities for over 30 years. Her activity workbook for individuals with developmental delays and beanbag kit are two of her many products.

Beanbag Breathing: Lie on your back, with a beanbag on the diaphragm and another one on the chest. Inhale deeply through the nose so that the beanbag on the diaphragm moves up, and the one on the chest does not. Exhale slowly through the mouth. The beanbag on the diaphragm should move lower, and the one on the chest should remain still. Keep practicing until diaphragm breathing is natural.

Throw and Hit: While standing, throw the beanbag into the air. As it comes down, hit it with your head, back, stomach, and waist. Next, hit it with right, then left, hands, shoulders, knees, hips, elbows, and wrists. Is it easier on one side than the other?

Juggle: Throw/Switch/Catch - With one beanbag in each hand, throw one up, switch the other. Catch with the opposite hand. Throw first with the dominant hand and then with the non-dominant hand. Throw/Throw/Catch/Catch - Throw beanbag from right to left and left to right simultaneously. Juggle two beanbags with one hand. Holding one hand behind the back, hold two beanbags in one hand. Rotate them from hand to air by moving them in a circular pattern. Switch hands.

If beanbags are too challenging, use scarves, which are also included in the kit, as they move more slowly.

Carol Kranowitz’s “The Out-of-Sync Child Has Fun”

This pre-school music teacher turned author has put sensory integration on the map! Her fantastic book has great games including the following:

Beanbag Jai Ali: Make a basket by cutting out a section of a clean plastic water jug. Toss a beanbag back and forth with a child, first standing a foot away, and gradually increasing the distance. Use the dominant hand, and then switch to the non-dominant hand.

Beanbag Mania: Two people sit facing each other on the floor. Divide six matching pairs of beanbags so that both partners have one of each. Place three beanbags on to the left and right of each person, arranging them so that they mirror each other. Ask the child to “mirror” your motion. For instance if you pick up a green beanbag with your right hand and place it to your left, the child will pick up a green beanbag with his left hand and place it to his right. Start slowly at first, increasing speed as the child gets the hang of the game. Use beanbags of different shades and textures. This activity is great for crossing the midline and bilateral coordination. It also enhances observation skills, anticipating, and non-verbal communication.

Several great companies that support DDR carry beanbag kits, games, and CDs with “old-fashioned” kid-friendly music and imaginative ideas. Go to <www.theraproducts.com>, <www.pocketfuloftherapy.com> and <www.southpaw.com> for beanbags and related products. Be sure and let them know you heard about them from DDR. Have fun!



Parasites: Why Some with Autism Are Not Recovering

By Cindy Griffin, Lindyl Lanham, & Julie Adams

Recent experience with clients who were “non-responders” to the best biomedical treatments made us think that maybe we had missed something. Could parasites be the surprising answer?

What are parasites? Any living creature that lives off of another living creature, consuming its nutrition, and ultimately harming it in the process, is called a parasite. Parasites come in many different forms. Bacterial parasites, like *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidia*, are responsible for severe diarrhea. Others are intracellular single-cell varieties, such as those that cause Lyme Disease and malaria, and larger types such as liver flukes and tapeworms.

Some parasites lay eggs (tens of thousands per day from a tapeworm or fluke) and others, microscopic single cell parasites, reproduce through cell splitting. Each type requires a slightly different approach to achieve elimination.

How do people get parasites? They are everywhere and largely unavoidable. Most come from oral or direct cross-contamination from soil, feces, urine, or saliva, including mouthing of toys in children, sandboxes, diaper changing tables, toilets, shopping carts, food preparation utensils, and countertops. We may even be born with them. Some spread through the air, through insect bites, if the insect is a carrier, and through our food.

Lean meat is the most common food source. Pork, beef, fish, chicken, all contain parasites (not found in the USDA inspections!). Pork is the most dangerous, because the tissue of pigs is so similar to that of humans that anything that thrives in them also thrives well in us. Produce may either contain parasites or carry them on the surface from the air, soil, water, insects, or animals that graze nearby. Watercress is frequently contaminated with a parasite linked to seizures.

What are the symptoms of parasites? Most people have few if any signs of parasites. Why? Because symptoms like unsociable behaviors or sleepless nights at the full moon are subtle. More obvious are immune system weaknesses. Parasites are very opportunistic and thrive when the immune system is stressed and can't fight them off. The inflamed gut, a welcome mat for parasites, and a compromised immune system, classic hallmarks of autism, drew our attention to parasites.

Parasites can produce very bizarre, unpredictable aggressive, angry behaviors in their hosts, many of which are classic autism.

SYMPTOMS OF PARASITES

- Fecal retention and/or smearing
- Rectal itching, digging
- Aggression
- Nail biting
- Mouthing of articles/fingers/hands
- Playing with saliva and/or genitals (stimming)
- Bruxism or grinding of teeth
- Pica or eating dirt and indigestible items
- Insomnia
- Hand-flapping
- Prolonged straining at stool
- Urination/defecation outside toilet, though toilet trained
- Enuresis in older children
- Chronic diarrhea
- Bizarre facial expressions, behaviors, worsening during full moon
- Seizures
- Obsessions and compulsions
- Anxiety over change
- Poor response to intensive biomedical and alternative treatments

Should I test for parasites? Probably not. Many parasite specialists agree that laboratory testing is imperfect and often misleading. Labs test for only 40 or 50 out of literally thousands of varieties of parasites; false negatives are common.

Treatment Options

- **Who** - Find a good professional who understands how complicated parasite removal is. Practitioners must recognize that a certain degree of gut health is necessary before beginning. They must then observe a specific order of elimination. The goal is not just eliminating parasites. Because parasite removal is a taxing event as the body excretes them and their by-products, simultaneous support of detoxification pathways and boosting the immune system is as important as fighting off the offenders.
- **What** - Pharmaceutical drugs alone are rarely successful, as many parasites have become resistant to these pesticides, and long-term use could kill not only the parasites, but also the host. Herbs combined with homeopathy are the healthiest means of elimination of parasites. Homeopathy can stimulate detoxification pathways and “keep things moving,” while the herbs create an unhealthy chemical environment for the parasites.
- **How** - Deal with the larger parasites like worms and flukes first before the microscopic, single-cell, and intracellular parasites, like amoebas and protozoa, so that the larger ones don't create “knots” or blockages in tissues.

Outcomes

Behaviors often worsen before they get better. Regressions are signs that parasites are actually present and in death throes. As these bugs try to replenish their numbers, parents may observe bizarre behaviors, such as eating dirt.

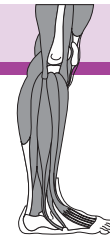
Do not undertake a parasite cleanse for children with autism spectrum disorders without the guidance of a knowledgeable practitioner. Many children can become volatile and aggressive. If they are dangerously immune compromised, and do not have adequate support, major problems with diarrhea could occur. **Do not undertake treatment without supervision for children with seizure disorders**, as treatment could cause seizures to worsen temporarily or launch a major seizure event.

Parasite removal can take four to nine months, sometimes longer. Be patient, and don't stop even though symptoms lessen or disappear.

To learn more about parasites, read the Executive Director's column, page 2, and *Guess What Came to Dinner?* by Ann Louise Gittleman, Ph.D., an Idaho nutritionist. (See booklist.) Ask your health care professional if parasites might be contributing to your family's health problems.

Cindy Griffin, Lindyl Lanham, and Julie Adams are professional homeopaths. Their practice, Homeopathy Center of Houston, provides a drug-free alternative for healing autism and developmental disorders. They host the Yahoo! Group “Homeopathy-ADDthruAutism.”

How Nutrition Impacts Muscle Tone



By Kelly Dorfman, M.S., L.D.N., Nutritionist and Cofounder DDR

Many children with developmental delays have low muscle tone or hypotonia, because external factors that impact the nervous system can also affect the muscles. Premature birth, heavy antibiotic use, and exposure to toxins damage all types of cells, causing generalized low tone or low tone in specific areas such as the hands or mouth. In severe cases of hypotonia, the muscles may be so weak that a child has difficulty sitting up for extended periods, chewing, or pushing out bowel movements. Milder cases, affecting the finger or eye muscles, cause fine motor delays or visual processing disorders. All children with hypotonia have reduced stamina.

Symptoms Associated with Low Tone

- **Fatigue/low arousal** – The body’s inefficient processing of nutrients results in reduced available energy overall.
- **Reflux/Constipation** – Poor or reduced trunk tone can cause stomach flaps to flop, thus impeding food movement.
- **Poor sitting posture** or “slumping” can be a result of soft trunk muscles.
- **Weak chewing and poor/picky eating** – Low tone in the mouth affects mastication, causing drooling when saliva pools in the open mouth.
- **Poor visual tracking** – Weak eye muscles struggle to control and coordinate eye movements.

What You Eat versus What You Get

In hypotonia, a big gap exists between what a child consumes and healthy cellular nutrition. While neurologists often attribute hypotonia to imbalances in the parts of the brain that control tone, low tone always has a nutritional component.

Muscles suffering from nutrient deprivation remain underdeveloped, or if adequately developed, fatigue easily. Whether a youngster is born with low tone, or acquires it through cellular malnutrition, good nutrition can improve the condition, while the tendency toward hypotonia often remains. Eating the perfect diet is only the beginning in low tone. The nutrients must get to the cells, which must then convert them into usable energy.

Three basic strategies can improve inefficient energy delivery and boost output: increasing available nutrients, enhancing nutrient delivery, and improving energy production. All of these can be achieved with specific nutritional supplements. Nutritional therapy for low tone is a long term management plan, not a quick fix.

Increasing Available Nutrients through Diet

The first step is to control the intake of concentrated sugars, such as candies, sweetened drinks, and desserts, while increasing the amount of protein in the diet. People with hypotonia tire easily so they often reach for sweets and starches as quick sources of energy. Protein foods tend to contain more concentrated nutrients than sugary items, which have many calories and few vitamins and minerals. Improving nutrient density is critical because inefficient energy production result is loss of nutrients.

Enhancing Nutrient Delivery

Carnitine (as L-carnitine or acetyl-L-carnitine) carries partially digested fat molecules across the mitochondria membrane. The mitochondria convert fats and carbohydrates into adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the cells’ main source of energy. Carnitine is a simple protein made up of the amino acids methionine and lysine. Children with severe hypotonia often have low levels of carnitine in their blood.

Carnitine is usually dosed at 50 to 100 mg per kg of body weight. It improves tone in the intestines, making it wonderful for constipation. It can cause loose stools or stomach distress in some cases.

R-Alpha Lipoic Acid (R-ALA) is an antioxidant with both water and fat soluble properties. It lengthens the life-span of antioxidants like vitamins C, E, and glutathione, prolonging their usefulness in the body. Studies have found it allows the mitochondria to rebuild, thereby increasing ATP synthesis. The normal range of dosing is 25-100 mg of the “R” form.

Improving Energy Production

Co-enzyme Q-10 (**Co-Q-10**), also called ubiquinone, helps to regenerate ATP. The body stores only enough ATP to provide energy for about five to eight seconds of strenuous activity, so it must constantly regenerate ATP using Co-Q-10. No Co-Q-10: no stamina. The beginning dose of Co Q-10 is 30-60 mg and can go up to 100 mg. Co Q-10 is non-toxic and well tolerated.

B vitamins are required as cofactors at different points in energy production. Imagine energy production as an assembly line. The workers along the line are the B vitamins. Adding more B vitamins is like hiring more laborers in a slow factory. That’s why B vitamins have a reputation for improving energy.

Use **B vitamins** as a complex. Youngsters with low tone need a minimum of several times 100% of the daily value on vitamin bottles. While B-vitamins are non-toxic, they can make some children cranky, possibly because yeasts like them, too. Keep in close contact with your supervising medical professional to adjust the B-vitamins if a child becomes agitated.

Vitamin E helps clean up oxidative damage from inefficient energy production. Free radicals are natural and destructive by-products of metabolism produced in much higher amounts when tone is poor. The vitamin E family also protects the fats in cell membranes including the mitochondria membrane, against damage.

The **vitamin E** family has eight members: four tocopherols and four tocotrienols. Nutritionists actively debate which member of this family has the highest antioxidant activity. Best to use the entire family. Megafood Complete E 8 is a good choice. Squeeze the contents out of the capsules and mix with food, if necessary.

Low Tone Can Improve!

Up the quality of your child’s diet and add supplements to increase energy efficiency and diminish hypotonia. For specific information on supplements, always confer with a health care professional.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Tuesday, November 14, 2006 – New York, NY**
Essential Elements of Feng Shui for Healthy Development
DDR sponsored lecture in our “Creating Healthy Environments at Home & School” series.
Speaker: William Spear
For more information and to register, call 800.497.0944 or go to:
<www.devdelay.org>.
- **Friday, December 1 – Sunday, December 3, 2006 – Seattle, WA**
Geopathic Stress and the Healthy Home
The role of “electro smog” in the autism epidemic. Science, diagnosis, and practical solutions with Robert Steller and Dr. Dietrich Klinghardt. Includes a professional home inspection tour. For more information call 425.637.9339 or go to <www.neuraltherapy.com>.
- **Friday, December 1 – Saturday, December 2, 2006 – Tacoma, WA**
- **Friday, January 19 – Saturday, January 20, 2007 – San Francisco, CA**
- **Friday, January 26 – Saturday, January 27, 2007 – Austin, TX**
How Does Your Engine Run? The Alert Program for Sensory Integration
To register, call 877.897.3478 or go to: <www.AlertProgram.com>.
- **Saturday, December 2, 2006 – Pittsburgh, PA**
42nd Annual PAEYC Conference
Speakers include Patricia S. Lemer, M.Ed. and Kimberly Kubistek, OTR/L.
For more information and to register, contact PAEYC at: 412.521.6663, or go to <www.pghaeyc.org>.
- **Saturday, December 2 – Sunday, December 3, 2006 – Orlando, FL**
- **Friday, December 15, 2006 – Atlanta, GA**
The SI Tool Kit: Bringing Sensory Integration to Schools and Homes
Speaker: Diana Henry, OTR/L.
For other dates, go to <www.ateachabout.com>.
- **Sunday, December 3 – Monday, December 4, 2006 – Baltimore, MD**
Brain Gym 101
Presenter: Shoshana Shamberg, OTR/L.
For more information or to register, contact Abilities OT Services at: 410.358.7269 or go to <www.aotss.com>.
- **Tuesday, December 5, 2006 – New York, NY**
Healthy Schools: What You and Your Child’s Principal Need to Know
DDR sponsored lecture in our “Creating Healthy Environments at Home & School” series.
Speakers: Mindy Pennypacker and Paul McRandle from “The Green Guide”.
For more information and to register, call 800.497.0944 or go to <www.devdelay.org>.
- **Thursday, December 7, 2006 – Washington, DC**
Getting Ready for the Holidays: Dealing with Gifts, Stress, and Diets
For more information and to register, contact DDR at 800.497.0944 or go to <www.devdelay.org>.
- **Saturday, January 6, 2007 - Washington, DC**
- **Saturday, February 24, 2007 – Washington, DC**
Family Constellations Workshop
Experience how transgenerational pain can affect today’s families.
For more information and other dates, contact Mary Rentschler at 202.244.8280.
- **Saturday, January 13, 2007 – New York, NY**
Globally Gluten-Free: Mexican
Instructor: Susan Baldassano.
For more information, contact Natural Gourmet Institute for Food and Health at 212.645.5170 or go to <www.naturalgourmetschool.com>.
- **Saturday, January 27, 2007 - Boca Raton, FL**
- **Saturday, March 31, 2007 - New York, NY**
Treating AD(H)D and Asperger Syndrome without Drugs
DDR sponsored all day seminars with workshops on diet, nutrition, biofeedback, chiropractic neurology, vision and auditory therapies and more.
Keynote speaker in Florida, David Berger, MD.
Keynotes in New York, Kenneth Bock, MD and Seth Pearl, DC, CCN.
For more information and to register, contact DDR at 800.497.0944 or go to <www.devdelay.org>.
- **Tuesday, January 30, 2007 – New York, NY**
Home Enlightenment: Health & Harmony in the Home
DDR sponsored lecture in our “Creating Healthy Environments at Home & School” series.
Speaker: Annie B. Bond, author of *Home Enlightenment*.
For more information and to register, call 800.497.0944 or go to <www.devdelay.org>.
- **Wednesday, February 14 – Saturday, February 17, 2007 – Pittsburgh, PA**
44th Annual International LDA Conference
For more information and to register, go to <www.LDAmerica.org>.
- **Friday, February 23 – Sunday, February 25, 2007 – Seattle, WA**
Treating Autism and other Neurodevelopmental Disorders
A self-help seminar for parents and practitioners with Dr. Dietrich Klinghardt.
For registration information, go to <www.neuraltherapy.com> or call 425.637.9339.

Developmental Delay Resources

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