

autism is never hopeless

No matter how severe the degree of autism may be, our children do progress. More and more, children are even recovering from autism.

Although certain subsets of children are more prone to recovery than others, early intervention, therapies and treatments greatly improve the symptoms of autism.

At the National Autism Association, one of our primary goals is to help parents within the autism community have the resources they need to make informed decisions about their child's healthcare.

The purpose of this brochure is to relay basic therapy and treatment information that many parents have found to be helpful for their children.

For more detailed information about each of the therapies and treatments listed within this brochure, please visit www.nationalautism.org.

The National Autism Association does not endorse individual programs, therapies, treatments, schools or facilities, or the theories or practices of any one individual.

Before initiating any treatment or therapy, please talk with your child's primary healthcare provider.

Remember, autism is never a hopeless diagnosis. With enough persistence and research, we will one day find the one answer we need so that all children with autism may recover.

dietary interventions

GLUTEN-FREE/CASEIN-FREE DIET:

The Gluten Free/Casein Free Diet is the removal of all wheat protein (gluten), and milk protein (casein) from the diet.

Many parents and doctors have found that implementing the GF/CF diet relieves many of the symptoms associated with autism spectrum disorders.

RECOMMENDED READING: *Unraveling the Mystery of Autism*, Karyn Seroussi

For more information about the GF/CF Diet please visit:
- www.gfcfdiet.com
- www.talkaboutcuringautism.org

SPECIFIC CARBOHYDRATE DIET:

The Specific Carbohydrate Diet is a scientific diet based on chemistry, biology and clinical studies. It is detailed in the book, *Breaking the Vicious Cycle*, written by Elaine Gottschall. The Specific Carbohydrate Diet was designed for patients with intestinal diseases. Many autistic individuals suffer from inflammatory bowel diseases including Colitis and Crohn's Disease.

For more information about the Specific Carbohydrate Diet please visit www.pecanbread.com.



visit www.nationalautism.org



recovery.

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therapy & treatment information for autism families

EARLY *intervention*

If your child is young and you suspect there might be something wrong, immediately seek early interventions services for your child.

Many states have some form of early intervention program such as a 0-3 Infant Development Program. Call your state or local Department of Human Services and ask to speak with someone who can help you set up a free evaluation for your child.

A team of trained professionals may come to your home to do an assessment and if your child meets their criteria for specific delays then you may qualify for services.

For more information on the ZERO TO THREE program visit www.zerotothree.org

RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT *intervention*

Relationship Development Intervention (RDI) Program is a parent-based clinical treatment for individuals with autism spectrum and other relationship-based disorders.

The RDI™ Program is based upon the model of Experience Sharing developed by Steven Gutstein Ph.D. Dr. Gutstein studied the means by which typical children become competent in the world of emotional relationships. The primary goal of the RDI™ Program is to systematically teach the motivation for and skills of Experience Sharing interaction. For more information, visit <http://www.rdiconnect.com>

BEHAVIORAL *intervention*

Many Psychologists and professionals will tell you that early intervention is key in treating autism. Many feel that behavior modification techniques are crucial in a child's early years. There are many types of behavior modification techniques:

APPLIED BEHAVIORAL ANALYSIS ('ABA') (LOVAAS METHOD); FLOORTIME (GREENSPAN METHOD); TEACCH; VERBAL BEHAVIOR; SONRISE

For detailed information about these therapies, visit www.nationalautism.org

GENERAL *therapies*

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY:

Occupational Therapy (OT) is a health service that is concerned with an individual's ability to participate in desired daily life tasks, or "occupations," which give one's life meaning. If a person's ability to perform these tasks which include caring for one's self or others, working, going to school, playing, and living independently is impacted by an illness, disease, and/or disability, OT can be important. OT is often paired with Sensory Integration.

PHYSICAL THERAPY:

An individual with autism spectrum disorders may benefit from Physical Therapy if they have any of the following indicators: increased muscle stiffness or tightness; Delay in obtaining motor milestones; Poor balance and poor coordination; Difficulty in moving through the environment; Postural abnormalities; Muscle Weakness; Pain

SPEECH THERAPY:

Speech therapy services focus on enhancing or restoring limited or lost communicative skills or swallowing capabilities lost due to injury, disease, aging or congenital abnormality. Since autism affects speech, many will need Speech Therapy to help facilitate language. Some individuals may do well with PECS or PICTURE EXCHANGE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM and others may do well with augmentative communication devices.

VISION THERAPY:

Vision therapy is based on the fact that vision is learned. The ability to see and correctly interpret what is seen does not appear automatically at birth. It develops over a lifetime and is shaped by the experiences a person has.

MUSIC THERAPY:

Music Therapy is the use of music and its elements (such as; sound, rhythm, melody and harmony) by a qualified music therapist. It can be used with an individual or in a group setting.

CANINE COMPANIONS

Canine Companions for Independence is a non-profit organization that enhances the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained assistance dogs and ongoing support to ensure quality partnerships.

For detailed information about these therapies, visit www.nationalautism.org

SENSORY *integration*

Have your child evaluated by an occupational therapist who is both trained in sensory integration therapy and certified to perform diagnostic testing such as the SIPT (Sensory Integration and Praxis Test).

Also consider having your child evaluated by the school occupational therapist and request sensory integration support on his/her IEP.

RECOMMENDED READING:

The Out of Sync Child, Carol S. Kranowitz

BIOMEDICAL *therapies*

Research shows that many individuals with autism spectrum disorders have underlying medical issues that frequently go undiagnosed and can cause or exacerbate symptoms of autism. These medical problems include vitamin and mineral deficiencies, food allergies and sensitivities, chronic viruses, bacterial and fungal infections, chronic diarrhea or constipation, impaired immune function, heavy metal toxicity, neuro-inflammation and more.

When these medical issues are addressed and resolved, the symptoms of autism can be dramatically reduced. Treatment options include vitamin and mineral supplementation, chelation therapy, hyperbaric oxygen therapy, anti-fungal and anti-viral therapies, dietary intervention, methyl B-12 therapy and more. Patients should undergo diagnostic testing and consult with a physician to develop an individualized treatment plan. To find a specialist in biomedical treatment for individuals with autism, please visit www.autism.com.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Children with Starving Brains, Dr. Jacquelyn McCandless
Changing the Course of Autism, Dr. Bryan Jepson
Healing the New Childhood Epidemics, Dr. Kenneth Bock
Autism: Effective Biomedical Treatments by Rimland, Baker & Pangborn

note: check with a DAN doctor, or your child's primary care physician before initiating any biomedical intervention.