

# Generation

Raising Healthy Children in the 21st Century



**EMPOWERED  
OPTIMAL HEALTH**

To learn more about how Functional Medicine can help, please visit [www.empoweredoptimalhealth.com](http://www.empoweredoptimalhealth.com) or email Dr. Ruby Thind at [drruby@empoweredoptimalhealth.com](mailto:drruby@empoweredoptimalhealth.com)

They say that children are the future, but what does the future look like? What will our children look like in that future?

For the first time in human history children will live a shorter lifespan than their parents. It is predicted that our children will be the sickest generation of human beings that has ever lived. It is unacceptable that millions of children and parents will face unnecessary hardships due to circumstances within their control. It's time for all of us to wake up.

# Our children grow up far too quickly. 1. Movement - Move it or Lose it

What were once adult diseases are now occurring in children younger than 10 years old. In fact, the name of several diseases have changed. Even adult onset diabetes has been changed to type II diabetes because it now occurs at virtually any age group.

Sadly, the number of children with ADD/ADHD has risen 3 to 5% every year since 1996. The number of children with autistic spectrum disorder is estimated at 1 in 44 children. The numbers are mind boggling and they get worse every single year.

This is not a genetic phenomenon, this is not a result from a lack of research or funding. The primary culprit that leads to the destruction of our children's health is ultimately environment and lifestyle. With the right information parents can raise healthy, vibrant, and productive families.

There is nothing more important to us than the health of our family. We have prepared this short article to shed light on children's health issues and to offer our services to those of you that are looking for a guided journey towards better health for your family.

This article will explore the 5 foundations of children's health; movement, diet, nutrient status, food allergies, and digestion.

Human beings are built to move. Don't believe us? Just take a look at your amazing body and the muscles and joints that allow you to move in so many different directions and do so many incredible physical feats. There is nothing more amazing than the human body.

Movement is the single most important nutrient to the brain. What water is to grass, movement is to the brain. It is literally that simple but extremely profound. Our children have become more and more sedentary and it is costing them their health.

Children are forced from a very young age to remain sedentary. Not for their own benefit but for the benefit of those supervising them or in many cases parenting them. With parental stress levels also reaching all time highs and energy at an all time low it can be an easy trap for parents to turn on the TV to numb their children or keep them occupied for a few minutes or hours. Keep in mind that many of them have been sitting in a classroom for several hours already. Children are programmed to move. Their brain requires it for development and for proper function. Certain systems in our body require that we move throughout the day and as much as possible. One of these systems being the lymphatic system (the body's sewage system). The lymphatic system requires movement to pump the





waste out our of the body. Along the same lines the digestive system tends to respond favorably to regular movement. Children who are more active tend to have fewer issues with constipation than their sedentary counterparts.

Did you ever notice that after your child started to walk that their intelligence levels increased and their ability to problem solve, speak, and communicate all increased? This was not a coincidence, this is because their brain is becoming so much more active thanks to all movement signals coming and going to the brain.

It is encouraged for children to be as active as possible at several intervals during the day. The idea is to keep them active throughout the day to promote healthy brain function, proper toxin and waste elimination, and better gut health. We strongly suggest that parents are active with their children, not only for their benefit but for acting as a positive role model.

## 2. Diet - You are NOT what you eat

The old adage was that you are what you eat. This is too simple of an explanation for diet and nutrition. There is more to this equation that often gets overlooked. The reality is; "You are what you eat, digest, absorb, and don't eliminate."

Yes it is true, every cell in your body is made from the food that you eat, water that you drink, and air that you breathe. These are the building blocks for life. Until fairly recently, most of our food supply was still recognizable! Our current food supply has become a chemical wasteland that gets uglier and uglier the more you research it. There are countless dyes and chemicals that lace our food to make it look and taste better. In fact millions of dollars are spent on research to trick our brains into wanting more of this poison. Keep in mind that people profit from selling you that food and people profit from fixing the illness that food causes. It's a viscous cycle that drives the health care and food industry. Neither one is paying attention to what the other is doing...or are they?



A healthy diet is something that may seem so obvious, but the reality is that most children do not eat their required fruits and vegetables on the daily basis. It is critical for children to get the right balance of healthy fats, anti-oxidants, and high quality protein in their diet. Every cell in their body depends on it.

### Sweet Lies

For decades dyes and additives have been added to food to make it not only taste better but to make it more appealing to the eye. Over 35 years of research has shown that these dyes and preservatives are very detrimental to the chemistry of the brain. The most noted culprits are dyes, blue and yellow. Other common additives that are found in so many children's foods are aspartame and MSG. Both are highly addictive and have been correlated with ADHD.



### 3. Nutrient Status - Deficiency in the land of excess

There are so many aspects to nutrition that are critical to child's developing brain and body. At a time when the brain is growing exponentially it is critical to nurture it and understand its requirements for optimal health. A major focus in managing a person's health is maintaining balanced blood sugar levels. Having balanced blood sugar means that children will have better mental focus, better clarity, more consistent energy levels, better sleep, and fewer cravings. Blood sugar is very easily regulated based on the types of foods one chooses. For example a piece of bread will raise a person's blood sugar much faster and create more stress on the pancreas than a salad with organic meat on it, which will have little to no impact on blood sugar levels. Chronic high intake of carbohydrates is a major culprit in weight gain, diabetes, poor energy levels, poor sleep, ADD/ADHD, poor mental clarity, food cravings, and the list goes on. It is critical to regulate blood sugar and insulin balance at a very young age to promote healthy dietary choices as an adult.

Specific nutrients are required for proper development and brain function. These include

B9, B12, iron, magnesium, zinc, and vitamin D to name a few. Deficiencies in these nutrients are a direct result of poor diet, poor absorption, or high demands. Many children have been found to have a combination of these nutrient deficiencies, explaining many of their symptoms and behaviors.

In the 1980s the craze was for America to go fat free in an attempt to improve health outcomes, guess what? Everyone got fat! Fat is not the enemy when it comes to children's health or even adult health for that matter. There are specific healthy fats that are required for the development of specific tissues in the body, particularly the brain. The brain and nervous system rely heavily on essential fats. These fats are called essential because the body cannot manufacture them on its own, they must be consumed in the diet. These fats are crucial for reducing inflammation, decreasing the allergy response, improving healing, hormone balance, skin health, immune health, and mental and emotional health. A diet low in these essential fats represents a critical dysfunction in cell metabolism and overall health.



Below is a chart that shows some of the major functions of the above mentioned nutrients. It is critical that these values are tested to identify your child's specific needs.

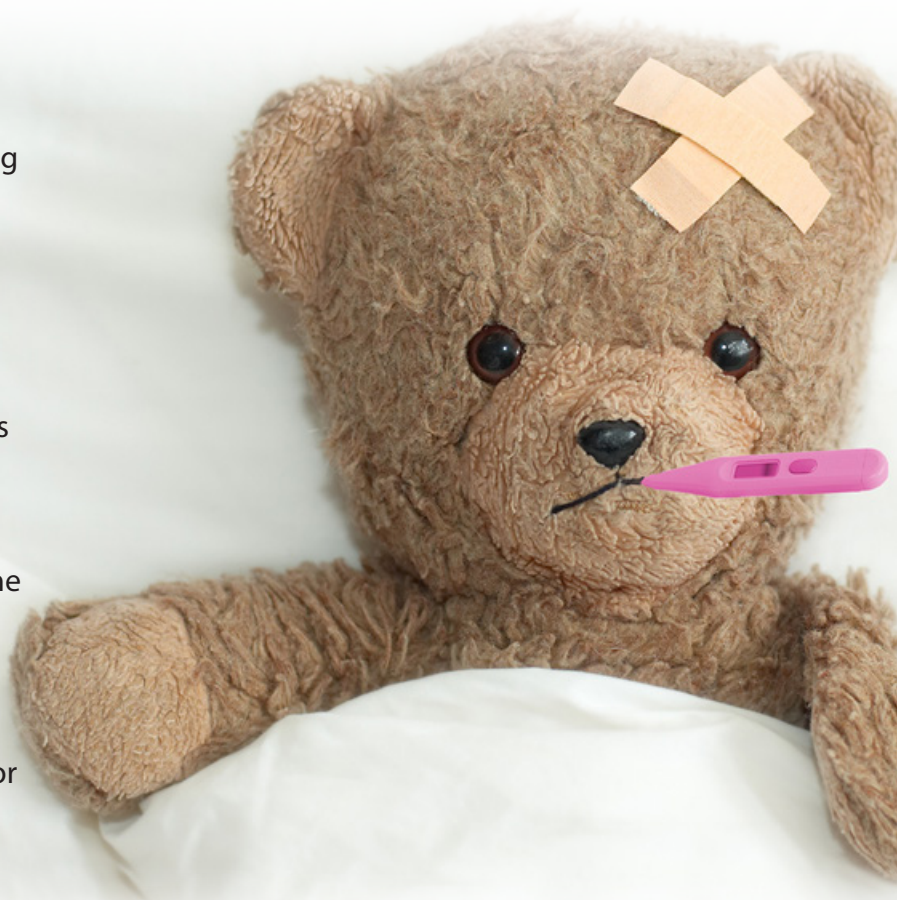
Nutrient	Function
Folate and B12	These B vitamins are known as being neuro-protective and are required for proper nervous system development. They help to regulate amino acids levels and are therefore critical in neurotransmitter production. This helps to regulate mood, focus, sleep, and mental function.
Vitamin D	Helps to regulate protective anti-oxidant levels in the brain, promotes immune health, reduces inflammation, and promotes a healthy digestive system.
Magnesium	Low magnesium is associated with hyperactivity and poor mental focus. Some estimates indicate that up to 90% of children are deficient in magnesium. Magnesium is required in over 300 reactions in the body. Deficiency results in several processes slowing down.
Zinc	Zinc also plays a role in almost 300 reactions in the body including inflammation, hormone production, blood sugar balance, and neurotransmitter balance.
Iron	Iron levels are typically low in children with ADHD and those with restless leg syndrome. Iron delivers oxygen to all parts of the body and is crucial for energy.

## 4. Hidden and Delayed Food Allergies - What you don't know will harm your child

Food allergies are becoming more and more common as a result of more man-made and chemical ingredients in our food supply. The immune system is constantly challenged by the foods that we eat. Our food has also been genetically modified and processed, further altering its molecular structure.

A growing concern in clinical practice that contributes heavily to food allergies is the lack of rotation in the diet. Ingredients such as corn and wheat are staples at virtually every meal and contribute to the allergy load on the child since it is consumed so frequently.

Making matters even more challenging, it is very common that the foods a child craves are often the one that they are allergic to. Allergies to wheat and casein (milk protein) are well documented as a contributing factor in ADD/ADHD as well as a whole host of childhood issues such as autoimmune disease. Getting your child tested for hidden food sensitivities can be crucial in helping them move towards better health.



## 5. Digestion - Extract and Eliminate

It is not only critical for your child to eat the right foods but it is essential that they are digesting their food thoroughly. Sadly, the primary function of processed food is to NOT break down, whereas, the primary function of your digestive system is to break down food. Clearly there is a conflict of interest when one eats processed foods with preservatives and chemical additives. The human body lacks the ability to fully digest these processed and preserved foods, thus leading to health issues down the road.

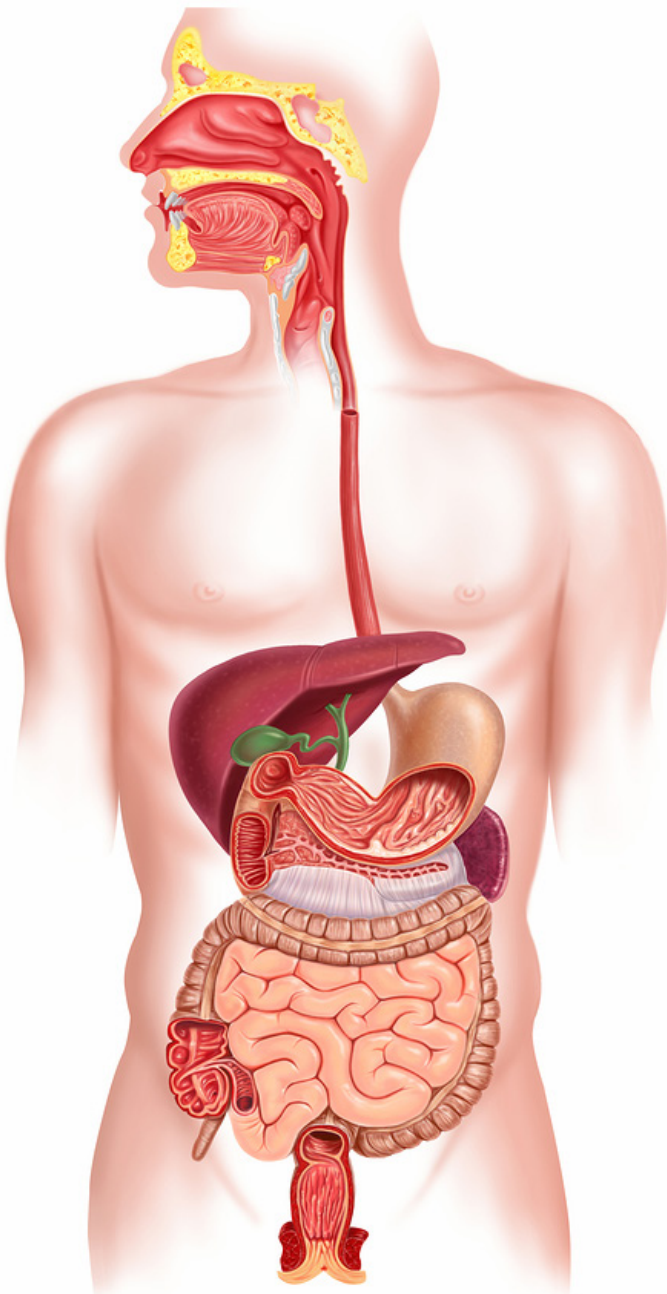
When food is not digested properly, it's nutrients are not absorbed properly and the food literally rots inside the digestive tract, leading to gas, bloating, constipation, diarrhea and inflammation. This disruption of digestive function can lead to food allergies and leaky gut syndrome. The health of the gut is a reflection of the health of the brain and vice versa. It is quite common to see imbalances in the digestive tract. The great news is that children respond very favorably to the right interventions. It is very important that your doctor orders the right stool test to determine any underlying imbalances in the digestive system.

### Our current approach to children's health

There is a dynamic shift that is taking place in the marketplace and for good reason. The current strategy that is being employed with children is dangerous, unpredictable and outright unethical. We are literally poisoning our children with medications, processed foods and destructive media and environments. It is no wonder our future generation is going to live a shorter lifespan with more disease and unnecessary suffering.

Currently, medications are only required to be tested on people over 18 to be approved by the FDA. One of the most common classes of medications include those that are used to treat ADD/ADHD. Medications such as Ritalin, Concerta and Vyvanse cause many side effects including depression, anxiety, insomnia, constipation, diarrhea, nausea, and loss of appetite in 39% of those that take them.

Besides this one dimensional approach, very few doctors interest parents in the lifestyle and dietary aspects of their child's health. There is a growing concern from parents who are looking for answers to raise a healthy and happy family.





## The Empowered Optimal Health Approach to Children's Health

In our fast paced world, many of us are looking for quick answers to complex problems. The great news about children is that they are extremely responsive to dietary and lifestyle modifications. In many cases the results can be seen in as little as one week.

At Empowered Optimal Health we believe that there is nothing more precious than your child's health. We will take time to listen to your child's needs and your specific concerns. Whether your child is suffering from ADD/ADHD or digestive health issues it is important to take a comprehensive, yet targeted approach to getting to the bottom of it.

As functional medicine providers we take a multi-dimensional approach to children's health. It is critical to address movement, diet, digestion, food allergies and nutrient status. There may be many avenues to pursue depending on the root cause of the issue. Working together we help parents uncover the root cause of dysfunction and develop a program to help correct the problem. Our goal is to help you and your children live a healthy and productive life...naturally.