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## Food Allergies and Kids

Notes from a Bright Futures round table discussion with parents – 5/7/10

There is difference between **food allergies** (which are foods molecules that are too big that have escaped across a deficient mucosal barrier) and **food intolerances** (which are foods that when eaten aggravate and compromise the mucosal lining, creating a 'leaky gut' which then sets the stage for allergies by allowing the inappropriately sized molecules to cross the gut lining). I find my work most often to be that with food intolerances. In removing these aggravating foods from the diet, I find the natural healing and rebuilding of the mucosal barrier can take place, allowing a reduction and/or elimination of allergies altogether.

One of our cultural practices that can set the stage for a compromised mucosal lining and allergies down the road is that we feed cereal grains to our infants before their digestive tracts are prepared to digest them. From *Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon "Babies produce only a small amount of amylase, an enzyme needed for the digestion of grains, and are not fully equipped to handle cereals, especially wheat, before the age of one year. Some experts prohibit all grains before the age of two. A baby's small intestine mostly produces one enzyme for carbohydrates – lactase, for the digestion of lactose. (Raw milk does contain lactase)." Breast feeding is the best insurance for robust health and proper intestinal development of babies.

Food intolerances can cause a myriad of health issues: diarrhea, constipation, abdominal discomfort, gas, bloating, vomiting, bed wetting, nightmares and restless sleep, skin rashes, eczema, dark circles or bags under the eyes, mood swings, ADD, ADHD, congestion, irritability, drowsiness, fatigue, mental confusion, weight loss, weight gain, anemia, an inability to recover easily from colds and the flu and/ or a heightened propensity to getting every cold or flu that makes the rounds.

The symptoms of food intolerance can show up immediately or can often carry out to 48 - 72 hours after consumption as it takes 3 days to eliminate the antigens from an offending food from the body. As a quick study, it is recommended to have your child stay clear of all of these foods for 2 weeks and then add them back in one a time and watch their body's response over the following 2-3 days. A food journal can help clarify the journey.

For kids, the minimum time of elimination to allow the gut to heal is usually 6 weeks (adults can take 90 days to 1 ½ years or more). Some people find that after having their children stay away from these foods for enough time to allow the gut lining to heal (6 weeks minimum to 3 months) that their children can go back and eat these foods again...in moderation and often only eating them every 3<sup>rd</sup> day. Others find that when their children go back their symptoms reappear. They then choose to just stay away from these foods as best as they can as they like the feeling of well-being without these foods in their diet.

**Although some children are found to have intolerances to nuts, shellfish, certain fruits or vegetables - the majority of food allergies are the results of these top four offenders:**

**Wheat**: is offending due to our hybridizing the grain to increase its gluten/gliaden protein content and the fact that we eat it meal after meal after meal and day after day. It most often aggravates the gut lining in those of Northern European descent (especially those of Irish, Scottish, Welsh, English and Jewish Russian ancestry). Some people are sensitive enough to the gliaden molecule that they must not only eliminate wheat from their diet, but all of the gliaden containing grains of **oats, barley, spelt, couscous and rye**.

**Pasteurized Cow Dairy**: milk as it comes directly from the cow is alive with the very enzymes and probiotics that we need to digest it properly and to nourish the flora of our intestines. When we pasteurize milk we kill off all of this aliveness. Our bodies then do not have what it takes to digest it properly and it becomes a congesting. Pasteurized milk is essentially a dead food, unless cultured with added probiotics such as in yogurt, kefir, sour cream and cottage cheese.

**Soy:** long professed to be a health food, soy can be very aggravating to the intestinal tract, especially again to those of Northern European ancestry. Soy also depletes the body (suppressing the thyroid gland in particular) of needed minerals as well as aggravating hormonal issues. There is a great deal of scientific evidence that soy formula can be damaging to newborns. (see the [www.westonaprice.org](http://www.westonaprice.org) article *Soy: the Dark Side of America's Favorite "Health" Food*)

**Corn:** usually thought of a vegetable, corn is actually a grain. That it is a grain alone can aggravate the intestinal lining for many. That it is often a hybrid as well as Genetically Modified (GMO) only aggravates the situation. If sensitive to corn, children must also stay away from corn starch, corn syrup and high fructose corn syrup.

**Your better choices to replace these foods are:**

**In place of wheat** – use rice, millet, buckwheat (buckwheat is a grass – not a grain) and root vegetables such as potatoes, yams, butternut and acorn squash for heavier, complex carbohydrates. Here also are some wheat-free products:

- Pamela's Gourmet Wheat-Free Pancake Mix – (even kids and husbands go for this one!)
- Rice Noodles – best is organic, brown rice as it is higher in nutrition, being careful to not overcook as it will be mushy. *Tinkyada* is an excellent brand.
- Rice Flours
- Rice Almond Bread, Rice Pecan Bread, Bean Bread, Millet & Rice bread (read labels carefully)
- Rice Crackers
- Flax, Sesame Seed and Sunflower Seed Crackers
- Gluten-free crackers such as *Mary's Gone Crackers*
- Pure Lentil Bean Pastas - (4 different shapes) "Panadini" is an available brand
- 100% Buckwheat Soba Noodles (read the labels carefully)
- Arrowhead Mills – Wheat-free All Purpose Baking Mix
- Corn Polentas, Corn Pastas – use only if you are not sensitive to corn
- Udi's gluten-free bread
- Sawpit Mercantile in Placerville - has an array of wheat free products and co-op purchasing
- Websites such as [www.knick-knick.com](http://www.knick-knick.com) and [www.glutensolutions.com](http://www.glutensolutions.com)

**In place of pasteurized Cow Dairy** – use raw milk (i.e. Kinikin Farms in Montrose ([www.freshrawmilk.com](http://www.freshrawmilk.com)) and raw milk cheeses (i.e. Organic Valley), goat and sheep milk products (which are less adulterated and more easily digested), almond milk and rice milk. (My first choice is almond milk as it has more protein and fat content; rice milk is primarily a carbohydrate). With both, read your labels carefully in that these alternative milks are often hyped with sugar, flavorings and artificial ingredients. You can easily make your own almond milk as well. (see recipe below)

**Best soy choices** (if you are going to use them): are those that are fermented such as soy sauce, miso and tempeh.

**Best corn choices** (if the body can tolerate corn): organic and non-GMO if possible, certainly stay away from corn syrup and high fructose corn syrup (which are leading contributors to diabetes)

**Carbohydrate** in the form of fresh, mashed banana can be added after the age of six months as bananas are rich in amylase. Soaking grains in an acidic medium (recipe below) for 24 hours neutralizes the phytates and begins the breakdown of carbohydrates, allowing children to obtain optimum nourishment from grains. It also provides lactic acid to the intestinal tract to facilitate mineral uptake. The safer grains to be first introduced to infants are millet and brown rice.

It is unwise to give your babies fruit juices, especially apple juice, which provides only simple carbohydrates and will often spoil an infant's appetite for more nutritious foods. Sorbitol, a sugar-laden alcohol in apple juice, is difficult to digest. Studies have linked failure to thrive in children with diets high in apple juice.

**Resources for your greater understanding of the role of offending foods:**

- [www.westonaprice.org](http://www.westonaprice.org)
- [www.mercola.com](http://www.mercola.com)

## Cookbook recommendation:

***Nourishing Traditions: the Cookbook that Challenges Politically Correct Nutrition and the Diet Dictocrats*** by Sally Fallon. Nutrition researcher Sally Fallon unites the wisdom of the ancients with the latest independent and accurate scientific research. Nourishing traditions, “more than a cookbook-it is an education”, contains over 700 recipes that will please both exacting gourmets and busy parents.

It can even be used as a reference book for vegetarians and or families wishing to take a more vegetarian approach in their meals. “I was surprised at the wealth of information to help me (even as a vegetarian) make better food choices and prepare the one I have chose to get the most nourishment from them” – P. Hinderberger, M.D.

## Recipes:

### Almond Milk

- Soak almonds in filtered cold water overnight. (Organic, raw and with skins is ok)
- In a.m., drain the water.
- In proportion of 1 c. almonds to 3 c. filtered water, place combo into blender and blend 30sec to 1 minute.
- Pour through strainer.
- Only lasts 1-2 days in the refrigerator, so make smaller portions more often rather than having it sit too long.
- You may add vanilla if you like.

### Soaking grains

From *Nourishing Traditions* by Sally Fallon

- 2 cups grain (such as brown rice)
- 4 cups warm filtered water plus 4 T yogurt, kefir or buttermilk
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 2-4 T real butter

Place grain and warm water mixture in a flameproof casserole and leave in a warm place for at least 7 hours. (Note: those with severe milk allergies can use lemon juice or raw apple cider vinegar in place of the yogurt, kefir or buttermilk). Bring to a boil, skim, reduce heat, stir in sea salt and butter and cover tightly. Without removing lid, cook over lowest heat possible for about 45 minutes.

### Congee

from *Healing with Whole Foods* by Paul Pitchford

Traditionally known as *his-fan* or “rice water”, congee is eaten throughout China as a breakfast food. It is a thin porridge or gruel consisting of a handful of rice simmered in five to six times the amount of water. Although rice is the most common grain for congees, millet, spelt, or other grains are sometimes used. Cook the rice and water in a covered pot four to six hours on warm, or use the lowest flame possible; a crockpot works very well for congee. It is better to use too much water than too little, and it is said that the longer the congee cooks, the more “powerful” it becomes.

#### *Healing Properties:*

This simple rice soup is easily digested and assimilated, tonifies the blood and the *qi* energy, harmonizes the digestion, is demulcent, cooling and nourishing. **It is useful for increasing a nursing mother's supply of milk.** Where as **toddlers** can partake of the whole porridge, for **infants** the liquid can be strained from the porridge to drink as a supplement.

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