



# Parents can make the difference in the search for answers

**W**e parents are aware of the psychological, physical, emotional and mental difficulties associated with autism. We have witnessed them and lived through the many trials they bring. However, what is more difficult for us to understand are the many diverse, erratic, and complex 'biological' issues found within autistic spectrum disorder sufferers.

My belief that autism can be cured is strong. And it is most likely that parents will make the breakthrough. It is parents who continually strive to uncover new ground, anecdotal as it may appear to the so called 'experts'. It is parents who best judge what is beneficial and what is not. I still remain sceptical of the abilities and knowledge of the many doctors who claim they know what they are doing in treating autistics.

Many will prescribe any number of pharmaceutical drugs including anti-epileptic drugs, liquid paraffin and antidepressants without proper evaluation or good medical reason. An autistic child with poor liver function and a leaky gut is likely to have allergenic reactions to some of the chemicals used within these drugs. Is it any wonder these children go downhill after the medication has been administered?

It's about time doctors focused their energy on treating the causes of autism and not the many and diverse symptoms. How many doctors initiate exploratory diagnostic tests to look for plausible reasons for the condition? Not many. Why?

The answer is lack of knowledge, time and money. So they offer a quick fix for the child to keep the


desperate parents out of the waiting room, at least for a time anyway. At the same time they continue to advocate the MMR jab and other vaccinations without any prior testing of a child's immune system to check whether he or she can cope with such a massive toxin overload. Where is the science in this?

Brain imagery and scans using MRI and other EEG investigations have revealed there is no difference between the brain of a child with 'acquired' autism and a typical child of equivalent age. How can it be that two identical brains can behave completely differently? Yet one is owned by a child placed

under the vast umbrella of ASD and the other is considered a normal functioning child? There has to be a reason why two identical brains perform so differently.

Let us consider this analogy: two identical cars come off a production line identical in size shape and form yet one is given petrol to function and the other is given diesel. One drives off superbly yet the other does not even start. Why? It is very simple, there only needs to be one single element to be out of place for something to go wrong.

When we compare the two children with identical brain structure on a biological perspective we notice a catastrophic number of differences:

<b>Leaky gut</b>	<b>Gut dysbiosis</b>	<b>Neurotransmitter disturbances</b>
<b>Immune dysfunction</b>		
<b>Poor intestinal absorption</b>		<b>Increased coagulation of the blood</b>
<b>Pancreatic enzyme deficiencies</b>		<b>Liver detoxification problems</b>
<b>Sulphation problems</b>		<b>Altered pH of the bowel</b>
<b>Metallothionein deficiencies and increased heavy metals (esp. mercury and aluminium)</b>		<b>Mitochondrial problems</b>
<b>The presence of viral, fungal, bacterial, parasitic pathogens</b>		
<b>Increased allergies to foods, flavourings, colourings and preservatives</b>		<b>Vitamin, mineral, trace element, amino acid, and essential fatty acid deficiencies</b>
		<b>Markers of inflammation</b>
		

There are others but this is quite sufficient to prove my point, our children are 'biologically' very, very different to typical children. The interaction between the brain and the central nervous system, the gut and the immune system is becoming better understood. This is where the clues to the many causes of autism lie – along with potential solutions.

We all know that inhaling chemicals by smoking, or absorbing alcohol, caffeine or other drugs, have an instantaneous affect on the functioning of the brain. This effect remains until the liver does its job and detoxifies these from our bloodstream.

If an autistic child has a leaky gut, poor detoxification systems and increased amounts of neuro-toxins and excito-toxins then it stands to reason their brain function will be altered along with their behaviour and functionality.

Many parents come to us and explain how their autistic child went through the roof after consuming some product or foodstuff that didn't agree with them.

Other parents, like us, report one day their child is fantastic yet the next they are 'out of it'.

unresponsive, irritable, agitated and impossible to handle.

Why is this? If they had any degree of brain damage such rapid changes in ability, functioning and behaviour would not exist.

So let's be positive and ask the questions that may uncover the answers we need. Where do we look? What do we look for? What can be done when we isolate such problems? Who can help us?

These are some of the many typical questions asked by parents. There is much to be done, time is against us and we need to be focused, proactive and reactive. In previous issues of *The Autism File* we have published the latest research and breakthroughs. We all need to constantly review the situation and identify the ever changing parameters.

Many of you completed a

questionnaire we sent out with a previous issue which helped address the family history, the pregnancy, maternal and paternal problems and your child's history, including use of antibiotics and for what ailments.

This should have helped you identify the areas for further testing. As you may be aware we have set up a group of post graduate clinical nutritionists to help you uncover some of these problems.

It is very simple to find one.

Access our website [www.autismfile.com](http://www.autismfile.com)

and then follow the link button to Nutri-Link and their list of practitioners. This will provide you with a map of Great Britain. Click on a region to find a list of practitioners operating there. Give them a call and discuss your situation. I am confident you will find them very helpful. If you do decide to attend a consultation, please ensure you are armed with as much information as possible. The completed questionnaires, previous test results, medical history, treatments, supplement lists of your current protocol etc. I always feel it is worth sending a copy of such information to the practitioner before the consultation as they then have time to thumb through the literature and build up a picture of your child.

Our autistic son, Billy, has improved beyond our expectations but I want more success. We were once faced with a 'no hope situation', a black picture was painted and we were travelling on a road to nowhere. That was shortly after Billy's diagnosis. We have since climbed high and are facing the challenges day by day. Do not stop, do not give in, do not listen to GPs who say 'there is no hope, no future – a life long disorder'. They are poorly educated about autism with little or no knowledge of the problems associated with this disorder. We have received wonderful calls and letters from parents who have seen wonderful transformations in their children

and in some cases complete normalisation. This evidence further provides the stimulus for me to continue, Billy deserves it and what man would I be if I didn't make the effort for him? We know this is a multi-factorial disorder and a single treatment will not cure it. It requires dedication, patience, love, enthusiasm and bullish persistence.

### Key areas to consider for investigation:

- The diet – gluten/casein free if these are problematical. (University of Sunderland) Specific Carbohydrate and sugar free diet. Hypoallergenic issues. The use of digestive enzymes.
- Leaky gut and dysbiosis.
- Deficiencies of the necessary building blocks. Amino acids, essential fatty acids, vitamins and minerals etc.
- Viral/Bacterial/parasitic/fungal infection.
- Stress and sensitivities to light and sound.
- Inflammatory markers and immune competence eg, TNF-a, IL1b, Sec IgA, ratio of Th1 and Th2 cells.
- Detoxification pathway: Phase 1 and 2.
- Thyroid and adrenal gland function.

**You are your child's hope  
and future so remain  
strong and focused in your  
endeavours.  
I wish you every success.**



## The Autism File needs our support NOW!

### Dear Subscribers,

Over four years ago, a few months after we were on the receiving end of the dreaded *autism* diagnosis and in that all too familiar state of panic about what to do next, Nick and I tuned in to *Trevor MacDonald Tonight* whereby we, like many others, gained an insight into how the Tommey family were adapting their life following Billy's diagnosis. As the programme ended and the credits rolled, I clearly recall grabbing the nearest writing implement and scrap of paper and writing down the contact details of what was soon to become *The Autism File*. The very next day I rang the number and now four years on I am writing to you all, not only to tell you about our experience, but to urge you all to join us in supporting *The Autism File* to ensure its survival in the future. *The Autism File*, which is ostensibly Jonathan, his wife Polly and a small team of volunteers, has been and continues to be a major source of support and information for many of us parents both in the UK and worldwide.

Being founder subscribers and having followed many of the testing and treatment protocols suggested by *The Autism File*, we have, over the past four years, built up a great friendship with Jonathan and Polly, who for us, as for many of you, have given an enormous amount of their time listening, supporting and advising.

We, like Jonathan and Polly, still have a long road ahead of us for our son Jack, but without the Tommeys and *The Autism File* publication we would, hand on heart, be nowhere near as far down that road as we are today! In order, however, to be able to continue treading that path, we need to safeguard the future of this magazine.

Until recently Nick and I had no idea how much work is actually involved in putting together and publishing each individual issue, not to mention the associated costs of printing, layout, artwork and postage – to name but a few! All this is done by Jonathan, Polly and their team of volunteers in their spare time, whilst also trying to hold down full-time jobs, run households and spend time with their own children! We, the subscribers, need to pull our weight too!

*The Autism File* is not a commercial venture. It is a magazine written by and contributed to majorly by people in the same position as ourselves, for people like ourselves. If we want to ensure its survival we need to help by raising some funds. Nick and I were recently approached by friends in our local village, who, knowing our son Jack and the challenges he faces, offered to hold a charity golf day to raise money for *autism*. The event was a huge success and resulted in a much needed donation of £4500 for *The Autism File*.

We are all in this together and for our children's sake we need to pull together. If you are able to help in any way, be it a fundraising event or donation, then please, please do.

Yours sincerely,

**Nick and Cathy Devereux**

If you would like to discuss fundraising for *The Autism File* or to make a donation, please contact me at: 01980 863179 (9am–12pm weekdays or after 8pm) or email me at [catherine.devereux@which.net](mailto:catherine.devereux@which.net).



## Dealing with the problem not the symptoms

**A**s many of you will already know I have a belief, based upon research, that the identification of biochemical deficiencies and dysfunctions in autism points to it being an inflammatory disease. I wrote about this in Issue 7 of *The Autism File* and after numerous conversations, Mike Ash, Managing Director of Nutri-Link, reproduced and expanded a theoretical and evolving flow chart in Issue 13.

Drug companies seem to be producing drugs that simply block the production of the enzymes that trigger the inflammatory response. These are the Cyclooxygenase-2 enzymes or Cox-2 for short. Like all drugs they are blocking the symptom and not addressing the cause. Pharmaceutical companies also generally overlook the plausibility of disturbed liver function in our highly toxic children.

When one produces too much Cox-2 then chronic inflammation results. Research indicates that imbalances and deficiencies of certain nutrients results in too much Cox-2 being produced. Many autistics have and share a number of problems associated with nutrition and digestion ie, a very select range of foodstuffs, impaired digestion of the foods that they eat, poor absorption across the gut membrane and a host of other factors that will lead to nutrient deficiencies.

It is known that once an infection occurs it stimulates the production of pro-inflammatory cytokines such as Interleukin-1, Interleukin-6 and Tumour Necrosis Factor alpha along with free radicals which further promote the production of more pro-inflammatory cytokines and compounds. This may lead to chronic inflammation. Ideally the body will balance this production with anti-inflammatory compounds which regulate the inflammatory processes with the nutrients derived from the very foods that our autistic children seem to be lacking.

Omega-3 oils in the form of cold water fish oils especially those high in Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and Decosahexaenoic acid (DHA) have anti-inflammatory properties. Linoleic acid from the Omega-6 family, unlike other Omega-6 fatty acids can increase the production of the anti-inflammatory prostaglandin E-1.

Many of the inflammatory problems associated with autistics may be as a direct result of this imbalance and therefore supplementation should be encouraged. It is a good idea to do a membrane test where the membrane of the red cell is studied to give a clear picture of the imbalance. It is also known that deficiencies in lipase production, the enzymes that break down these fats is disturbed in many autistic sufferers.

Apart from providing fats it is also important to provide nutrients that will mop up the overproduction of free radicals produced by the inflammatory cascade. So what foods must one consume in order to reduce the body's pro-inflammatory cytokine and prostaglandin production? The answer is foods that are low in Omega-6 fats and high in Omega-3 fats.

### Omega-3 fatty acids

Omega-3 fatty acids especially in the form of EPA and DHA are important building blocks for anti-inflammatory prostaglandins, eg prostaglandin E1 and for turning off the production of Cyclooxygenase-2 enzymes and therefore the production of the pro-inflammatory cytokines IL-1, IL-6 and TNF-a.

### Vitamin C

Vitamin C has excellent free radical scavenging qualities and reduces inflammatory production, and in particular sacrifices itself to stop the formation of superoxide which if combined with nitric oxide in the gut can create the potent inflammatory molecule called peroxynitrite. Polyphenols and Flavenoids also have received high acclaim for reducing the production of TNF-a and COX-2 enzymes.

### Gamma linolenic acid

Omega-6 fatty acid in the form of Gamma linolenic acid, even though this is an Omega-6 fatty acid, can increase the production of the anti-inflammatory prostaglandin E-1.

It is however important for these fatty acids to have the other requirements necessary for them to work and these are Vitamin E, Vitamin C, Niacin, Vitamin B6, magnesium and zinc.

Vitamin-E reduces the production of Cox-2 enzymes and prostaglandin E2 and also moderates nuclear factor-kb (NF-kb) and activator protein (AP-1) which are compounds that turn on inflammatory genes. It has also been shown through research that Cat's Claw and St John's wort has been beneficial in diminishing and controlling the production of NF-kb and AP-1.

### Ginger

Ginger inhibits the production of Cox-2 enzymes and other pro-inflammatory compounds and is said to be more successful in treating inflammation than aspirin.

### Curcumin & rosemary extract

Curcumin and rosemary extract (ursolic acid) are potent inhibitors of the Cox-2 activity and are therefore also useful in reducing inflammation.

So as one can see from the above there are many ways by which you may be able to turn off inflammation in your child. I would recommend that you consult a Nutri-Link Practitioner ([www.autismfile.com/nutrilink.htm](http://www.autismfile.com/nutrilink.htm)) to help address this if you feel you may wish to pursue this course of action. It became clear to me that a great number of autistic children who are benefiting from the supplementation of oils, ie essential fatty acids from the Omega-3 family are experiencing good results and felt that these benefits are contributable to their anti-inflammatory properties.