

Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

www.fedup.com.au

("eczema", "rash", "psoriasis", "rosacea " keywords only)

See also factsheets on [eczema](#), [ribo-rash](#) and [rosacea and acne](#)

[1312] 160b annatto: One-liners (March 2015)

Jittery movements, anxiety, foggy head, eczema - Lynda

[1300] Chlorine and behaviour/health issues - facebook thread (February 2015)

My daughter gets eczema from the chlorine, I use Jungle Brolly skin barrier cream all over her before swimming, I have also read a freshwater shower before swimming helps stop the skin absorbing so much chlorine - Cathy

[1277] Seven years of burning rash (September 2014)

I have been dealing with what is at times a very debilitating rash. It is a burning rash - typically not itchy - and is located in the flexural areas -armpit, groin, under breasts. The skin burns, sometimes develops blisters that are easily popped, scabs in areas, and skin that literally peels away. I've been to several dermatologists, doctors, allergists, etc. in an effort to find the cause of this rash for 7+ years and really never been completely without it during that time. Any dermatologist I have seen has refused to consider that the rash could be food related.

2 weeks later:

This is day 6 of the failsafe plan and I have not experienced the burning sensation for the last couple of days. I am feeling very encouraged by the improvement. I will definitely carry on with the diet and hope to see continued clearing of the rash. I am so grateful for your website. This has been such a difficult process and I truly felt like I just didn't know what else to try - Janet, by email

[1275] "Like a switch it turned her eczema off" (August 2014)

I just want to say that I am very thankful for the failsafe diet, all the books, groups like this and support from people near and far. I have had my family on the strict failsafe diet for 9 days now and my daughter's eczema has reduced by about 80%!! It's incredible as a few days ago there looked to be no improvement and it was like a switch has turned her eczema off. The only patches left are a handful of really deep ones that I am sure will disappear in another week or so. So exciting!!!

Another big win was yesterday my daughter went to a birthday party and I packed her failsafe party food and drink. On pick up time she was zooming about with her friends so I assumed just another crazy party with a meltdown to occur around dinner time. Once in the car she settled immediately and we got on with our evening with her chatting happily about the party. No tantrums, negative

attitude, harsh words, nothing! It's times like these when you eat yet another serve of only beans and potato (I miss my carrot and broccoli) that you realise time and effort well spent - Tameka from facebook group

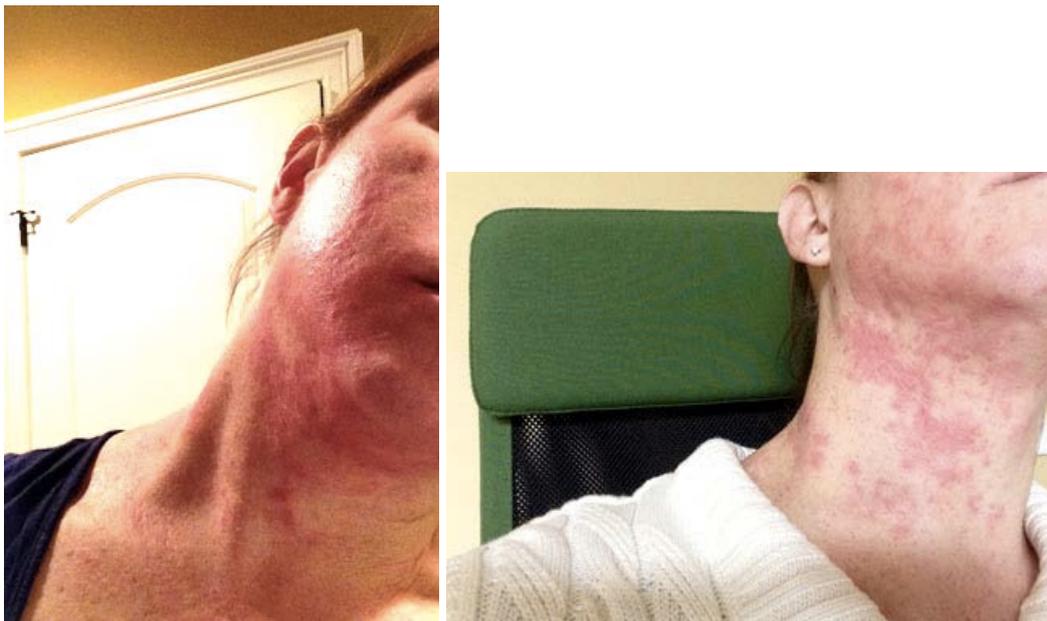
[1273] What has failsafe meant for you and your family? (August 2014)

Failsafe gave me quality of life again after years of terrible eczema. Now I control it instead of it controlling me and my family! – Ruth

At my absolute worst, with a diagnosis of fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue and IBS, with speech issues, constant headaches, psoriasis, untold medications and a very real chance of having to use a wheelchair, I can easily say FS saved my life. I'm now fit and active, run a business, teach belly dancing and thoroughly enjoy life - Sue

My son had terrible weeping and bleeding eczema, and we were spending a fortune on prescription creams and remedies that weren't really working. His skin cleared up once we eliminated food chemicals, but that was just the start of his improvement - he was sleeping better, his stomach pains disappeared, and our doctor (who had been watching him as an early diagnosis case of ADD) told us that he saw an enormous improvement and wasn't concerned anymore - Lindsey

[1266] 635: Mother of all skin reactions, with photos (July 2014)



Before coming across your site trying to understand a reaction to Lay's Bar-B-Que potato chips, I'd been tested for food 'allergies' and have experienced increasingly severe rashes since 2008, when I had the mother of all skin reactions that lasted for several months (chronic hives (urticaria), swollen, droopy eyes, and rashes) . The doctors simply diagnosed eczema and food intolerances and said there was no cure. Well, SOMETHING changed to suddenly cause all these reactions - I just felt I should be able to 'change it back' somehow.

I now know that MSG, yeast extract, and of course the disodium guanylate E627 and disodium inosinate E361 (found in those evil Lay's potato chips) are absolute triggers for me. It's difficult to avoid, but the good thing is I know now and can avoid feeding these excitotoxins to my family. I'm outraged at these chemicals being added to our foods. Excitotoxins, in addition to making foods delicious, frequently cause permanent nerve damage - is it worth it?? Not for me, but for the companies that make these foods, YES because they taste good so people buy them.

Thank you for this information ! I'm including some pictures of this rash in varying stages of severity; you're welcome to use them on your site if you wish. - Jodie

[1265] One-liners (March 2014)

I am a recent convert to failsafe eating after a friend told me how she cleared up her daughter's eczema. Our family is currently on the elimination diet to try and figure out exactly which food chemicals affect whom and in what way ... Our oldest daughter's eczema and mood / engagement has already been transformed by cutting out gluten and cutting down on salicylates from term 4 last year. She is literally a different child. My other daughter's problems (6 yrs old) with wetting her pants during the day / sneaky poos / wetting the bed occasionally have absolutely stopped since she went off dairy - Edwina

[1259] 202 sorbates: Rash reaction to potassium sorbate in Starbucks cafe mocha (February 2014)

When I drink Starbucks cafe mocha I get significant irritation on my face. It affects the skin between my eyes, my cheeks, the crevices of my nose and my chin. At times it has spread to my scalp. It can also affect the center of my chest. It mainly just looks bad but the affected skin can be tender and sting. Without further exposure the redness lasts a few days. After researching the ingredients it seems likely the potassium sorbate ingredient is the cause, though it will take exposure to potassium sorbate through other products to be certain.

Starbucks cafe mocha is made with Fontana Bittersweet Chocolate Mocha Sauce which contains this ingredient. The ingredients for the Fontana sauce can be seen here: http://www.starbucksfs.com/Products/Details/Bittersweet_Chocolate_Sauce - Rick, by email

Sue's comment:

I agree that potassium sorbate (preservative E202) seems the most likely cause of facial irritation. It is well documented in the medical literature that sorbic acid and potassium sorbate can cause contact dermatitis but less well known that foods containing sorbates can cause erythema (reddening of the skin), most frequently on the face and back, worse in people with rosacea.

Reference: CRC Handbook of Food, Drug and Cosmetic Excipients, page 366 <http://books.google.com.au/books?id=FDIsTRAhLRoC&pg=PA366&lpg=PA366&dq=Cutaneous+reactions+to+sorbic+acid+and+potassium+sorbate+Fisher+AA&source=bl&ots=PmAzNNxk19&sig=PsxzACvnJTZEvvSjLIP1HcFXTPc&hl=en&sa=X&ei=Yf7zUsm0BMfqkAXXioBw&ved=0CDMQ6AEwA>

<w#v=onepage&q=Cutaneous%20reactions%20to%20sorbic%20acid%20and%20potassium%20sorbate%20Fisher%20AA&f=false>

[See 200-203 Sorbates factsheet](#)

We would be interested to hear any other reports of a reaction to this product: suedengate@ozemail.com.au

[1258] My little Firecracker is now a fierce warrior (February 2014)

My failsafe baby started high school this week. Twelve years ago I was at breaking point trying to find a reason my baby was covered in eczema, never slept, did frothy green poos, and never smiled. Sue Dengate saved both our lives, literally. My little Firecracker was one of the first babies to join Sue's support group and the affirmation and support I received from others on those groups has seen me forge lifelong friendships. Today my daughter is a fierce warrior. She is eating foods, her body continues to lead the way and we all listen. It's not an easy road by any stretch of anyone's imagination, but this works.

I've recently been reminded of what life was like before Sue pointed me in the right direction and I realised how far we've come. My little Firecracker is the best person she can be, and it's all thanks to you. But it's not just about her and babies. Failsafe also gave me my life back and I do my bit to pay it forward. Thank you Sue, for showing me how - Blanca

[1247] Dust mites, eczema and failsafe (November 2013)

My son was about to be put into hospital for his severe eczema but doing all these things below as well as the RPAH diet has seen his eczema almost disappear, and his rhinitis as well. One thing I've noticed is that if we relax the diet, his skin goes dry and scaly, and then next thing is the inflammation and full blown eczema. So I believe that, in our situation at least, the condition of the gut (what you eat) affects the function of the skin (goes dry and scaly), and then the environmental allergen can get in and cause the inflammation. This goes for rhinitis as well.

There are a number of things to limit your exposure to dustmite, but you can't get rid of them (unless you live in the desert!). It's important to remind yourself of that because, like the food situation, it can send you a bit bonkers trying to do everything, all of the time. However there is a lot you can do and it works.

Dustmites like warm moist dark places and they live off dead skin cells and mould. So your bed is the first place to start. Get good quality mite covers (see Melbourne supplier below recommended by allergists). Cover the mattress (and the base if it's not timber) with the mite proof covers, cover your pillow as well and doona/quilt. You'll need to wash the covers fortnightly, and the rest of the bedding (sheets) weekly. Hot wash 60°C will kill the mites, but it's the mite poos that actually cause the allergy so a long cycle in the machine will wash the droppings away.

Get rid of carpets, wash curtains regularly. Eucalyptus will also kill mites, so use the Bosistos <http://www.fgb.com.au/about-bosistos> range of cleaning products, sprays and detergents, which work well but limit exposure because they aren't failsafe. Anything that can't be hot washed

can but put a plastic bag and into the freezer overnight to kill mites, then washed on gentle cycle next day to remove the droppings (I do this with soft toys and delicate fabrics). A de-humidifier is an option as mites need humidity to survive. So if the constant washing gets you down, that is something to think about.

Check out helpful www.housedustmite.com and <http://www.allergend.com.au/> – Diana from failsafeeczema group.

See also story [\[1012\] Eczema exacerbated by dust mite allergy](#) (March 2006)

[1242] Salicylates and asthma - cough drops! (October 2013)

I recently discovered that I have a sensitivity to salicylates after getting a rash (not for the first time) which seemed due to taking aspirin for a cold. In researching what in aspirin I might be sensitive to, I came across numerous articles linking asthma and aspirin, and one case study very similar to mine where a woman thought she was allergic to numerous medications, but it turned out it was only aspirin, and the salicylates in mints that she was sensitive to. Each time I've developed this rash has been when I've had a cold, bad enough that I probably should have stayed home from work. In order to speak with people while working and not cough all over them, I use cough drops, the natural ones, which are loaded with all kinds of mint and mint-related herbs, and usually honey too. This last cold started on Christmas day, and after the cold left I was left with what seemed like asthma like wheezing and coughing, bad enough that I was using two cough drops an hour. Last week I caught another cold, and when I started to get a sore throat I took aspirin, and continued with the cough drops. After two days of aspirin (only about 250mg, maybe twice a day), I developed the rash, and worsening sinus symptoms. Imagine my surprise when in the course of my research I happened upon one of the failsafe websites, and realized how many things I eat and use (I don't like to use chemicals so I've been using natural products that have a lot of essential oils in them) that have high levels of salicylates in them.

Since stopping the cough drops and starting on some version of failsafe, my asthmatic symptoms have really receded, so I hoping some other symptoms will improve as well when I get some of the personal products - such as deodorant and toothpaste - more under control. - Glenda, Canada

[1202] 635: Related to eczema (July 2013)

Both of my children both suffered from eczema. My son was diagnosed as infantile eczema at 10weeks old. I had discovered that before failsafe that what affected his eczema was lactose, legumes, nuts and coconuts. I had his skin perfect before going failsafe for his ODD and Hyperactivity. Seems that allergies can play a huge part in eczema so I have found. Now, that he is not on failsafe anymore, I have noticed he gets really severe eczema in the creases of his elbow and behind knees. I have put it down to 635 as he works at McDonalds and eats more junk food.

My daughter had milder type of eczema so wasn't too much of a concern. However, when she started eating more junk foods, she started with a small itchy red rash on her leg, and then it spread to both legs, moving upwards towards her face. I had a suspicion it was 635 that did this. It was still getting worse even though she had stopped eating anything with 635. She took oral steroids, but as

soon it wore off, it came back again. I took her to my appointment with my allergist and he had a look at her legs and said 'reactive eczema' and to eat 'what your Mum eats' to get it down. I had already done elimination diet many years ago with my daughter and found that glutamates and high levels of salicylates affected her. So I simply just cut out the salicylates and glutamates and within 2 weeks the rash had gone. She then slowly introduced the salicylates again and tries to avoid glutamates as much as she can. She can now pick it if she eats something that has 635 as she gets extremely itchy legs which bleeds - Teresa, Victoria.

[1198] Speech pathologist reports on diet (June 2013)

Two stories that readily come to mind about food and speech are:

First, a new client, 4 year old boy. When I was assessing his language comprehension, which involved him looking at 4 pictures on a page, and pointing to the picture I was speaking about, this young boy merely pointed to all 4 pictures on each page, counting "1, 2, 3, 4". I honestly thought he had huge cognitive issues.

His mother rang me the following day, asking for help, reporting that he had wandered off the previous night, and been picked up by the police on the highway. At our next appt., this amazing mother had made huge changes to this boy's diet!!! And when I asked her why she was being so proactive, she reported that she was a science teacher...and it all made sense!!!

Well, within 6 months, this young boy's standardized assessment subtest scores went from 1 and 2 to 11-13...(normal limits for standardized scores being 7-13. And I am not that good a Speechie!!!)

Second, another new 4 year old client's mother handed me the Paediatrician's report, which mentioned that he had severe eczema. He was also very active!! I immediately handed her your network brochure and latest Food Additives to Avoid card.

Again...this incredibly proactive mother set about making huge changes to her son's diet. Several weeks later, as he sat and attended well during our Speech Path session, his mother reported that, as I could see, he was now sitting and listening, and was also doing as he was asked at home.

She then went on to tell me that last winter, her son had been seeing a dermatologist in Melbourne, who had instructed her to not only put a particular cream onto the rashes on his arms and legs, but to then wrap his arms and legs in wet bandages.

She reported that when she refused to use wet bandages because it was winter, she was told she was non-compliant. This young boy's mother smiled with such delight, as she told me that since making your suggested changes to his diet, his eczema had completely gone.

I have to hold back tears when I hear such wonderful success stories...especially after explaining to the parents that I have no training in this area, but am just passing on your information to empower them to make a difference – Jane, Victoria

[1193] Avoiding salicylates, amines and additives reduces rosacea symptoms (February 2013)

I wrote to you quite some time ago regarding rosacea. My skin is still not 100% right, although avoiding salicylates, amines, preservatives and additives certainly reduces the symptoms of flushing, itching, and red pimples. - Lyn, NSW - see [Rosacea and acne factsheet](#)

[1116] My eating disorder (Bulimia 1-5 times a day and Binge Eating every day) has stopped (July 2012)

I am 23. I led a high achieving, healthy active lifestyle until about 6 years ago when Bulimia slowly introduced itself into my normal, happy life, I nearly lost my scholarship and it ruined my VCE which I was unable to complete and was continued by many months of incredible ups and downs.

It then progressed to Severe Bulimia, Binge Eating Disorder, Anorexia, hospitalisation and long stays in inpatient facilities for people with similar issues. Everything seemed like a temporary fix, a week after finishing programs I was back to my old habits.

About 18 months ago, with my barely manageable eating disorder, I moved by myself to a new town ... I needed a new start, fresh faces and thought a change of scenery would help and it did :) I met my current partner after the first month of being here and he's been nothing but supportive of all my issues. To look at and meet me I'm you're average bubbly, blue eyed, blonde hair, healthy looking girl and I think it was quite a shock when he first he learned what the "other me" was like.

After 6 months however things started to go downhill with my health - my asthma, hay fever and eczema went crazy - which had only ever happened occasionally over my life (but never all at the same time) as I've had them all since I was a baby.

What really bothered me was a rash on my face that I had never experienced before - swollen lips, eyelids, dark red blotches underneath my skin, which turned to swelling, my skin flaking off and incredible itchiness!! As my self-esteem wasn't that great anyway, this was a huge blow. I quit work, uni, and it ruined my social life.

I thought it may have been the natural environment around me, new town, new plants, pollens etc as it was sometimes accompanied by sneezing. My crazy eating habits were another likely culprit.

I went to the Doctor, he gave me some steroids which cleared it up but kept coming back. Then turned to allergy testing, cutting out certain foods through a nutritionist , gluten, all the usuals etc. Useless. Used all natural makeups, moisturizers, cleansers etc. Useless again

I've always known that preservatives aren't good for us, always eaten well in the past and thought of myself as fairly educated about food (that might sound strange when someone has an Eating Disorder but it's very common) but because additives had never been a problem in the past it never occurred to me that they could be the cause.

I found your website by chance whilst researching the issue on the net and along with your website's helpful info, photos and testimonials I knew I had found what I was looking for. I started cutting out the 600 number flavour enhancers and the 200 number preservatives (I wasn't aware that dried fruit could be so delicious but deathly for my skin!! I'd always make sure there was no added sugar but

that's all I worried about) ... Anyway, instant recovery ... now I'm trying to cut out the rest of the nasties too - in both foods and makeup.

We have always eaten loads of fruit and veg and always go organic when we can afford to but it's hard trying to buy food that both my boyfriend and I will be happy with as he's an eating machine who's affected by nothing and never puts on weight ;) We're getting used to it ... we're happier.

I myself have SO much more energy it's unbelievable, I'm sure it neurologically changes something in your head. My eating disorder - it was currently Bulimia 1-5 times a day and Binge Eating everyday - has been completely stopped.

It's been nearly 2 months - I feel so free. Where it used to be constant, I now rarely have my crazy OCD thoughts filling my head with foods, food info or body image. I know it's only early days but I'm optimistic and am going to try my absolute hardest ... I honestly haven't felt this good in years.

I've never seen any information about the links between food additives and Eating disorders - I definitely intend to research this further.

Thank you so much for being a revolutionary voice and caring enough to share your knowledge with the rest of the world. You have seriously changed my life and inspired me to take action. - Jayne, by email

[1109] One-liners (April 2012)

'We've been using your cookbook for a few weeks and her eczema rashes, hives, and swelling have been more under control than any time in the past two years!' – Jessica, USA

[1088] Severe anxiety from salicylates (January 2012) COURAGE AWARD

My daughter Rose is 7 years old. Since she was about 18 months old, we had problems with her waking every night with nightmares. Although her behaviour was not exceptionally good, it was not an issue at the time. When Rose started 4 year old kinder we started to notice that her eczema was getting quite bad and that it was not responding to any remedies that we tried. We saw doctors who just said that she might grow out of it. When Rose started school, there was a huge turning point. Her behaviour I would say was ADHD behaviour – tantrums, itching all over her body, stomach pains, still having nightmares, oppositional defiance and the list goes on, and the worst of all, severe anxiety with me leaving her. Rose's anxiety was so bad that she had to be physically removed from me when I left her at school, even punching and kicking at the teachers. Rose would not leave me at all, even on weekends.

With trying to counteract the behaviour part, I stopped all additives and preservatives. Rose's behaviour became so much better. We noticed that her sleep, and feelings of anxiety did not improve.

After reading your book, I made an appointment with a dietician and started on the Elimination Diet. Everything started to improve with Rose, in leaps and bounds, except the anxiety. With many trials, I have now established that Rose is very sensitive to SALICYLATES.

I now have a daughter who is very confident, well mannered, has no problems sleeping, no eczema, nor does she have anxiety.

I can only say that without your help, I had no idea where to turn. The professional field let me down big time.

We have been doing this for about 12 months and I am a true advocate of Failsafe. I want to introduce this to our school. When my daughter was in Prep we had a lot to do with the Principal, as Rose spent a lot of time in her office, as they believed she was being naughty. Last year I was determined to prove them wrong by showing them that food did contribute to children's behaviour. I did often say that it was the food Rose was eating, but I know they did not believe me. I can now truly say that Rose's behaviour was as a result of the food, its additives and preservatives, as she is a different student. Well mannered, high achiever, leader material. Thank you. - Sharon, Vic

[1081] Our toddler was a little tornado on salicylates (December 2011)

My husband was one of the first children to go on the Feingold diet in Australia in 1973. His parents still talk about the amazing improvements they saw although on that diet he was allowed pineapple, dates, cauliflower and mushrooms. I think some of the improvement was that they had a local butcher, they made their own bread, and they never ate out because there was no eating out then. They had a wonderful local chemist who made them toothpaste.

Because of that you would have thought we would twig much earlier to our son but we didn't. We avoided tomato and orange a lot because from when he first went on solids he broke out in a rash and did again a few times so we just didn't eat them. But he got worse over time. At 15 months he would run up our very steep street and then do 4 blocks of the neighbourhood, with us trying to keep up. I'm now pretty sure that was the kick he was getting from the salicylates. His absolute favourite was apricot teddies. We used to only let him have 1 or 2 every fortnight but that, along with all the other high foods kept him like a little tornado.

My husband's mum told us about salicylates when we went away on a holiday. His eczema got really bad and we thought it must be from the chlorine when we went swimming. She suggested fish oil tablets so we got some for kids but they also had high salicylates. He just went hyper in no time. He kept asking for more of them and that night he screamed and screamed all night and kept scratching worse than he ever had. He had welts all over him in the morning.

We tried cutting out just salicylates and saw some improvement but it just got bad again. Then I went hunting on the internet, found your book and we talked with our doctor about doing the RPA elimination diet. The change was noticeable, the biggest being less extreme mood swings and going to sleep at night. Bedtime used to be a 2 hour stint every night and then he would collapse in exhaustion.

We have seen head banging on two occasions, well after we started the diet. My sister gave him some yoghurt by mistake with Annatto 160b in it and he was a very loud very angry little boy. He didn't really have tantrums as such but did quite a bit of banging his head, wouldn't let us near him. He didn't want to be touched at all and kept threatening his little brother with all kinds of nasty

things. A lot of yelling. He did not sleep at all well that night needless to say. It was the same the second time. – Susan, by email (Please report similar annatto 160b reactions to suedengate@ozemail.com.au)

[1073] Some feedback from the Fedup Roadshow 2011 (September 2011)

'My son has severe eczema', said a mother, showing me a phone photo of her 3 year old's terrible rash. What does he eat? High salicylate products such as honey flavoured cereal, strawberry jam and strawberry yoghurts ... we hear over and over again that salicylates are a major contributor to eczema, yet many mothers do not know about this.

'Salicylates and preservatives including sulphites - in dried apricots - turned out to be the major problems for our son's severe eczema', said one mother.

'Even though tests showed my daughter had grown out of her egg allergy, her eczema improved when we took egg out of her diet again, as well as salicylates and additives,' another said.

[1066] Anniversary: 12 months failsafe for severe eczema (July 2011) COURAGE AWARD

Sleepless nights... what an understatement! We were averaging 2/3 hrs sleep a night when the kids' problems hit a peak. This went on for months.

We were at a loss as to what had taken over our family and was slowly breaking us all down to a point of no return. As parents, feeling helpless, exhausted, and desperate was quickly becoming our normal. For our children it was far worse, they were struggling constantly with scratching, bleeding and screaming in pain, day and night. Finding our 4 month old son bleeding in his cot was a regular occurrence. Then there were the times holding our 6 year old daughter while she screamed, thrashed, and clawed at her flesh causing it to bleed. All too often they were in unison and my husband held our baby trying to comfort him as he suffered the same way while I held our daughter.

A vicious cycle of skin infections, constant discomfort, and numerous trips to doctors who assured us it was just eczema only added to our desperation.

We knew the kids had allergies and avoided all the allergens as directed by specialists but unknowingly we were contributing daily to their severe discomfort by what we were feeding them - and it wasn't even a bad diet ... or so we thought!

Our life line came the day we saw Sue on the local news, she mentioned itchy skin rashes and I took notice! Life changed that day. Slowly but surely we eliminated the foods and personal care products that were causing this chaos.

It is our anniversary this month ...12 months failsafe and our gift is 2 beautiful children with silky smooth skin (we regularly run our hands over it amazed at the difference), no more rashes, itching or screaming through the night & guess what?... they are both calmer & more engaged ... behaviour was not our original motivation to become failsafe but we have noticed the changes in them in this area as well and what an absolute bonus that is.

Thanks Sue and Howard for your many years of research and hard work and also for giving us a place to turn when there seemed no where else to go, we are forever grateful – Deb (Deb is organising the [Fedup Roadshow](#) talk in Taree 2011)

[1065] 220: Sulphites and eczema – “it pays to be persistent” (July 2011)

Feb 2011: I live in the UK. Since childhood I have suffered from sporadic, mild eczema, but for the past 8 months I have had a severe rash, starting on my arms and legs and then spreading to my scalp and stomach. It has been unbearably itchy. In this time I have been prescribed Betnovate ointment and anti-histamines and been treated twice for scabies! The rash has eased several times and then come back again.

After reading about "ribo rash" I realised that I had been using instant gravy granules regularly during the past year and that these contain E635. I am also allergic to (British) chocolate and have to be careful not to eat too much, too often. I can, for some reason, tolerate Belgian chocolate though.

Thank you for the information on your site, it could be a turning point for me.

May 2011: I've cut additives out of my diet altogether but wine seems to be the culprit. Since I stopped drinking it the rash is very slowly clearing. I'm also mainly dairy free at the moment. When I'm clear I'll start to introduce these things back slowly and see what happens. Now that I've narrowed it down I need to pinpoint exactly what the cause is. It has made me realise though that a lot of the time we really don't know what we're eating!

June 2011: I'm able to let you know that sulphites would seem to be the problem. I'm managing to cut them out of my diet, although it's difficult as they masquerade under different names and are in most manufactured foods.

Unfortunately they're in most wines too in fairly large amounts and so I've also had to give up my favourite tippie. My rash has virtually disappeared, with just a few stubborn patches remaining, and it has left red marks which I'm sure will fade in time. A year of hell, really.

I hope my story might encourage other sufferers to 'turn detective'. It certainly hasn't been easy because my symptoms don't show straight away but it pays to be persistent – Lynn, UK

(There's no need to give up your favourite drink, SO2GO removes sulphites from wine - Sue)

[1064] Salicylates: “they said he couldn't come back to preschool unless I did something about his behaviour” (July 2011)

I just wanted to say thank you so much for the website and books! My son has been on failsafe for 8 weeks now and it's like a cloud has been lifted from our family. We have our little boy back!!

Riley's physical problems started at about 2. His face was constantly covered in a horrible red rash. This rash moved to his bottom and his nappy area was full of blisters and skin so raw it would bleed. Sometimes it got so bad he couldn't walk properly because he was in so much pain.

At 3 the behavior problems started. Riley had little energy. He didn't play with toys much and preferred to be in front of the TV. He had a lot of fears and anxiety and most of all he was angry. Most of his anger was directed at me and he would hit, pick and slap me often. I would spend days in tears not knowing how to help him. At preschool it was pretty much the same, Riley had a very short fuse and the kids were all scared of him because of his outbursts.

Eventually they asked me to get him assessed because they believed something was wrong with him. I was told they couldn't handle him anymore and said he couldn't come back unless I did something about his behaviour. I tried lots of different things but nothing worked until I was told about failsafe.

The change in these short 8 weeks had astounded everyone. His teachers at preschool asked me who was this boy? he now is friends with everyone, hardly had outburst and often says I love you to his teachers followed with lots of cuddles and kisses. He has energy now. He doesn't want to watch tv, he wants to dance and run in the backyard and play games with me. He no longer hits me and our relationships is closer than ever. No more rashes either or anxiety!

He is affected by salicylates and we are soon going to test amines but I suspect he won't pass that challenge as he seems really grumpy the day after I have given him a banana or cheese.

I have been telling everyone about this diet and I will continue to share my story. Thanks so much. I can't even imagine how you have changed so many families. –Jodie, by email

[1012] Eczema exacerbated by dust mite allergy (March 2006)

A few years ago my son's health was declining with eczema attacks lasting several hours, and hives breaking out without us knowing the reason. He was already on a restricted diet but he was awake for 2-4 hrs every night, screaming "please help me, Mummy", and his legs were sometimes so scabbed up that he could not straighten them enough to walk. He was five. Eventually, we found the problem was dust mites. We knew he was sensitive to them because he had been allergy tested by a doctor, but I had "relaxed" a little with the vigilance I had previously had. And then I realised that the whole time, he had a big tear in the dustmite cover on his mattress.

So I went back to using the dust mite wash from the supermarket, and washing his sheets four times in clear water after that, and hanging them on the line all day, every six weeks. And washing his sheets in hot water every three days. And clearing his bedroom of everything except a bed, and wet-dusting once a week. The difference was amazing. The first night, he actually slept through. And now, a year and a bit later, his legs, which were just big scabs from bum to ankle, are beautiful creamy soft smooth skin. And a much happier boy. The emotional scars are still there, and taking time to heal. We got a book about eczema by a dermatologist that discusses the emotional toll on the family, and it is so true.

[1011] Allergy to Sorbolene (March 2006)

When our daughter first developed a rash our GP diagnosed it as pityriasis rosea, which is uncommon but not unheard of in babies and resolves itself after about 6 weeks. Two months on the rash was still there, so since then we have been trying to figure out the cause via the GP,

naturopath, paediatrician, etc. Then one day I took my daughter to see the clinic sister who has seen her rash LOTS of times and mentioned to me almost in passing that some people can be "allergic" to sorbolene. Apparently people can build up a sensitivity to it over time and we've been slathering it on our poor daughter for months! I stopped putting it on and within a day her rash started improving. [Sensitivity to Sorbolene can be to the ingredient TEA which is used in the Redwin soap, above]

[989] Annatto 160b: eczema, tantrums and head banging (March 2011)

My son William had eczema behind his knees when he was 6 months old and then it went away. In October this year it reappeared (just before his 2nd birthday) with a vengeance! It was behind his knees and then spread to his legs, patches on his arms and his entire chest was rough. Fortunately we got onto it quickly and he didn't suffer with any broken skin, however the key things I took out were vegemite and grapes. He had only had vegemite for a few weeks but it took ages to get the eczema to go again. After spending a weekend with my mum, William had eczema behind his knees again. The only thing she gave him which I never do was Vaalia yoghurt (160b) so I took that out and double checked EVERYTHING he was eating for 160b and bingo! No eczema since, with the added bonus of far fewer tantrums. When I realised he had yoghurt with annatto at my mum's house (and had a little eczema again) I threw out everything that had annatto in it (Heinz kids muesli bars which I was giving him occasionally). The other reason, apart from eczema that had me throw out annatto was his tantrums. William was headbanging again, which he hadn't done in a while. That day I took out annatto and that was the last time I saw him headbang, and that was in November!

He still gets frustrated and chucks a wobbly every now and again, but there's been a big big change since removing annatto. If a normal tantrum for William is a 3/10, they were 8/10 before I eliminated annatto. – Margaret, by email

[956] Feedback after two years on failsafe (August 2010)

Our family have been following the Fed Up books for over 2 years now for a 5 year old daughter who was reacting severely with rashes on her face & body & a son whose doctor wanted to prescribe ADHD medication.

I can happily report that our daughter is rash-free and in fact after 7 years she doesn't even have eczema anymore. I believe her immune system has improved dramatically since being mostly failsafe. She is a healthy beautiful clear-skinned little girl with a good resistance to illnesses these days. My son is also progressing well with a mostly failsafe diet and fish oils to help with concentration. (our biggest problems - artificial colours & preservatives & in my daughter case - corn as well).

Just as an aside to this story - I put up with dreadful headaches every day for about 15 years, along with the headaches I got muscle cramps in my neck & shoulders. I was on a muscle relaxant for years until visiting a chiropractor. I went off the medication but after some weeks had a return of the problem after eating bacon & ham.....I am now convinced it was nitrates that were giving me the problem, and I have proven it a couple of times since. I have read about headaches & nitrates but

can't find anything on it affecting the muscles - for years I thought I was just being uptight!! - Julie by email

[949] 319,320: Itchy red burning rash/eczema due to antioxidants in hot chips (October 2010)

My 14 month old ate some hot chips at a restaurant last weekend for lunch and two hours later she had a very bad red burning rash/ eczema all over her body. She has had eczema from a newborn relating to milk but has out grown this intolerance. I was surprised at how bad her reaction was; very red and angry looking all over her body, very irritable and would not leave my arms. I was also very surprised at how quick the rash came out!! I called the restaurant they said the chips come already cut and packaged with ingredients: Vegetable Oil, Soya bean, Cotton Seed, Sunflower and dextrose. Chips are then cooked in Vegetable Oil with antioxidant E900, E319 and E320. Do you think it might be the antioxidants or something else? The chips did not have chicken flavouring on them - I thought of that and asked them they said no seasoning at all.

Two weeks later: went to a McDonald's Birthday Party today and while I was taking one of my other children to the toilet a friend gave my daughter approximately 10 hot chips (ingredients include antioxidant 320). When I was putting her to bed tonight she had broken out in eczema on her face and body. Only small patches, nothing like when I first contacted you regarding a bad reaction to hot chips at a restaurant and she ate a lot more that day. I am thinking if she had eaten a lot more the reaction would have been worse! I presume I can now say she definitely has a food intolerance to antioxidants as she has now reacted twice to hot chips with antioxidants 319 (TBHQ) and/or 320 (BHA). - Breda, NSW

[942] 621: Supraventricular Tachycardia (October 2010)

Over the past 15 years I have suffered from numerous things - CFS, IBS, Supraventricular Tachycardia, rosacea and itchiness. Post 2000, things were going along fairly okay CFS wise but I developed the SVT after the birth of my son in 2003. I had this corrected in 2007 (very long diagnosis!) but still continued to suffer the odd palpitation here and there. My IBS started in 1999 and I would swing from constipation to diarrhoea. My rosacea had been with me since 1997 and nothing would take it away. The itchiness started in 2008 and so did the headaches.

To cut a long story short, in January of last year I decided it was time to start looking into diet seeing no-one could work out what was wrong with me. So I went totally preservative, colour and sulphite free and purchased your book. Basically followed everything on the list of things to avoid. I did the same for my children. My rosacea disappeared! I also stopped itching and started to have less headaches and heart palpitations. I identified that sulphites affect my breathing, MSG affects my heart, something gives me headaches and 160b makes me itch. However, my diarrhoea and fatigue still remained. Eventually I looked more into salicylates (despite what the dietician thought!) and that was the final piece of the puzzle. - Rachel, NSW

[899] Really bad eczema in baby (February 2010)

I have been meaning to write for ages to thank you for the Fed Up work and for the wonderful contacts. I am seeing your recommended dietitian. Previous to changing to a low chemical diet our

baby has suffered from really bad eczema since 3 months of age, has been to hospital twice and wet wrapping once. Now he has a small patch under his chin only when I eat a suspect food (shallots, golden syrup etc) and that is all! I am a complete convert and find the Fed Up and RPA books wonderful. It is so hard not to run up to strangers with eczema kids to tell them to at least trial modifying diet to low chemical.

The dietitian is wonderful and very encouraging. I am still able to breast feed our baby, and we are alternating challenging him through my diet and adding a new food for him. He now eats rice and choko, and I am challenging soy first. The limitations are tough, especially around this time of year, but so worth it for happy healthy children! Thank you, thank you, thank you.... - Natalie, Sydney.

[879] Miraculous change in extreme sleeping problems (November 2009) COURAGE AWARD

I was a single mother living alone away from family support, breastfeeding and juggling a wonderful son who at 12 months was barely sleeping 4 hours a day. Most days he looked as if he had drunk a can of "red bull" - eyes rolling, twitching and distant - and sleep only ever seemed to come lightly for short periods once he was beyond exhausted.

He had a rash all over his body that just kept spreading and it made me cry watching him tear at it all day and all night without any relief.

At 12 months I put him into a local day care centre for 2 days a week for some sort of break (sleeping sometimes in the car just around the corner too tired to make it home to sleep after dropping him off). He was a real handful there as he would not settle and ever sleep and would upset all the other babies with his screaming.

I was beside myself by the time I swallowed what pride a new sleepless mum had left and sought every kind of assistance I could - my baby health nurse, my local doctor, and then another doctor all said it was normal (as they all shrugged their shoulders) and the eczema was a lifetime hereditary thing ...

I was even assessed at a local government "sleep clinic" on the gold coast - an awful experience with him not sleeping at all for them and them saying 20 hours without sleep "may be normal for him " - (bugger me !!)

After my lowest darkest point whereby at about 14 months he barely slept in 40 mins increments I was sent to the state children's sleep school in Brisbane. The basic program philosophy is about controlled crying - but that wasn't his problem ...

It was a 5 day hellish event I would wish on no one. He screamed and cried for the first 3 days solid and set new limits in sleep deprivation - made easier the 3rd day only because he totally lost his voice and his screams couldn't be heard !!! By day 4 he slept (passed out) from sheer exhaustion - so that was apparently a success and I was sent home day 5!!

After only a day or two at home it was obvious there was no improvement.

The next few weeks as I contemplated our future without support, sleep or potential for work as things stood really took its toll, until I was blessed to come across a pharmacist in our local pharmacy. She sat me down and really talked me through the failsafe approach - and really took the time to make it sink in. I was an unwilling participant as when you are so exhausted anything new seems to be insurmountable.

It took 4 days!!! only 4 days !! from having someone waking 8 times a night to 2 times a night!!! from sleeping 4 hours a day to 8 hours - and 10 hours by the end of the week. Once I switched to A2 milk the loop was complete and he started sleeping the night through by the end of week 2. The change was nothing short of miraculous.

For my son to go from the least favourite boy in his kindy to the favourite almost within a week!! It was like someone had handed me a new son.

He became an affectionate loving inquisitive boy that every mum would be so proud of - no tantrums, no fits of rage, renewed energy and able to concentrate on things so much better he simply bloomed, like watching a wilted flower come back to life after rain.

His rash completely healed - completely!! He is now 2.5 years and it has never returned!!

When I tell people about all the positive changes we have had on the diet, they seem to think the diet I fed him before failsafe was really poor. They assume it was full of red cordial, McDonalds, coloured commercial lollies etc but I was aware of colours and MSG and he NEVER had those. At the time I was following the diet recommended by the child care centre. It was the sulphur dioxide in dried fruits, the hidden nitrates in meats, and natural colour 160b I wasn't aware of, that were our biggest problems, also I was breast feeding at the time and was having more "junk food" and stimulants from comfort eating to keep me functioning so he was getting it that way. I realise my mistake in overdoing a "healthy diet" mostly consisting of a mega high salicylates, high amines and glutamates!! and although I was careful about colours and some preservatives, my son's biggest and most immediate reactions came from fish/ meats/ and preserved fruits.

Having followed all the information you have put out there in the Failsafe Cookbook my son has thrived!! He has come from behind to be the tallest and fittest in his class. The effect this failsafe lifestyle has had on Patrick has been evident to all who knew him "before diet" as we call it.

I often have people ask me about your work, especially from his childcare centre as they have followed his progress and it's so rewarding to see the individual but still dramatic change it has on other babies, toddlers and children.

I get angry when I think of the torment and the lost first 12 months of his life - and that a children's hospital in a week could not assist or pick up what a pharmacist did in seconds - but promise in my own prayers of thanks for you and the pharmacist that I will do my best to help those similar suffering mums that cross my own path. Thank you. - Patrick's proud mum, Qld

[855] Ham sandwiches cause behaviour, eczema, concentration problems (October 2009)

A few months ago we went over to Europe. When we came back my 6 yo son went back to school and started getting very clingy, crying and not being able to read or write properly and was not able to concentrate. I have had trouble with these symptoms on and off over the previous year and a half. I mentioned this to my friend, she gave me the book and I started your additive-free diet (we did not eliminate fruit/veg or cheese).

After about 1 week everything had improved dramatically. I waited about 4 weeks before I introduced nitrates (ham). He went pretty nutty after eating it, not violent, just manic. The next day he had bad eczema and was unable to read or write properly when I asked. The teacher also mentioned that he was having trouble concentrating again. He was also crying and clinging to me when it was time to drop him at school. The effects lasted about 5 days. I realized of course that when we had come home from overseas he was having ham sandwiches (not something he would normally eat). I then went back to the additive-free diet again. Michelle, by email

[854] A GP's opinion about salicylates in foods (August 2009)

My son's preschool required a letter from a doctor confirming that Charlie couldn't eat salicylates (because lunches were provided).

When I told him Charlie reacts to salicylates in food with eczema, asthma and behavioural problems, my GP said that made sense, since people with asthma are told not to take aspirin because it is high in salicylates.

I was astounded. "Then why don't you tell them not to eat high salicylate foods?"

He replied honestly and from the heart that as doctors, they weren't trained in nutrition and so they didn't know about salicylates in foods. - Helen, NSW

[845] Eczema and additives (August 2009)

Nearly two years ago you referred me to a dietitian. My daughter Zoe was under her for approx a year for eczema problems. During that year she did the elimination diet and then the many food challenges. Zoe will soon be 3 and today she is a different child. Before doing the diet the pediatrician had talked to us about doing wet dressings. The diet showed that sulphites, nitrates and food colours both artificial and some natural affected her eczema badly. Sunscreen is also a big challenge for us. Anyway, I wanted to let you know how great the diet has been for Zoe and we can only hope that the manufacturers out there are able to find other alternatives for preservatives and colours. I find the biggest challenge is the byproduct sulphites like glucose syrup and vinegar. People always say to me how hard this must be for her. We are so incredibly lucky that she is not anaphylactic and that she has responded to the diet so well. She may only be 2yrs old but she always comes to us and asks if she can eat what is put on tables at parties and gatherings etc. Thank you once again for helping us out with Zoe and for getting the message out there. My girlfriend showed me the book and if it was not for that then I would still be following conventional medicine to combat the eczema. – Kirsten, NSW

[841] Eczema-type rash linked with rosemary extract in Farex (August 2009)

I started our 5 month old on solids. She had a few days of farex (ingredients: ground rice, vegetable oil, vitamin c, antioxidant (rosemary extract), mineral (iron)). I noticed that she came out in a rash on her legs, the bubble eczema type rash. She has always had some form of redness behind her knees under her chin and in the creases (wet areas I call them) but this was much more obvious and red. I stopped the cereal and it settled down. I started again yesterday and the rash is back. I am worried that she will have skin problems that may be food intolerance and I want to do the best thing for her from the start. I have a friend whose daughter has such severe eczema and I just don't want to go down that path of creams etc. If I can do the right things for her from the start I will try. – by email (Rosemary is high in salicylates; salicylates are commonly implicated with eczema. You can make your own baby rice cereal: cook plain white rice with water, breastmilk or formula and puree in a blender)

[839] Eczema related to salicylates and wheat in a breast-fed baby (August 2009)

Our baby suffered severe eczema for 8 months and was in wet bandages for 4 months straight. We were also using advantan cortisone cream on her every night. At 7 months old both my breastfed baby and myself (mother) did the RPA Elimination Diet which made no difference to her skin condition. She has allergies to dairy, soy, egg and peanut which she never consumed herself and which I stopped eating when she was 6 months old and still breastfed. After the dermatologist from the RCH said that it was most likely a food intolerance causing the eczema (she was 13 months), I contacted you again and then tried removing salicylates from her diet again as she was no longer breastfed. Within about 5 days she went from being in wet bandages, very itchy, irritated and hyperactive to skin almost completely clear and requiring only tiny amounts of cortisone. She also became a much happier baby. We have since discovered she also gets eczema from eating wheat. She is on a very limited diet because of her food intolerance and allergies but we are giving her some Neocate to try to make up for what she's missing out on. Thanks so much for the tip on salicylates, although it is hard feeding her on a limited diet, it was much harder seeing her suffering, using steroids on her skin and keeping up with the constant bandaging. – by email, Vic

[828] 621: 635: Better sleep and behaviour without glutamates (July 2009)

I have been a huge fan of your diet, site, book, cookbook and dvd since it helped us sort out why our 2 year old girl was misbehaving. We did the full elimination diet very strictly and passed sals, amines but failed glutamates. We also avoid the nasty additives but haven't formally challenged those.

My little girl is now 3 years old. Her behaviour, sleep and eczema are so much better when she doesn't have glutamate or additives, however I have felt recently that there must be something still in her diet that is affecting her as she sometimes has mood swings, defiance, silly behaviour. I have been giving her home made stock and slow cooked casseroles thinking they are OK because she passed the amines challenge and I thought it was just amines that increased with ageing and cooking time but I recently read in Friendly Food that glutamate does too. – Michelle, Vic

[715] Success with eczema (February 2009)

I started the elimination diet with my daughter two weeks ago and for the first time in I can't remember how long her eczema has finally settled down and she is so much calmer and happier. My husband and I are just so thrilled with the results we have got in such a short space of time.

3 months later: my daughter is fantastic, the diet has been a huge success for us and I honestly can't share it with enough people. I was just looking back at photos of her the other day and I couldn't believe how bad her eczema was, in the recent photos there was none at all. We now know that salicylates are a real problem. Additives seem to have an impact as well but I am happy that they are no longer part of her diet and never will be.

Since our success a number of our friends and acquaintances that have tried it with the same results. As far as I am concerned the more people who know about this the better. Before reading your book I honestly had no idea of the real effect food had on us.- *Abi, by email*

[705] Action-movie eczema (November 2008)

My husband suffers from severe eczema controlled by diet. A couple of months ago he was watching an action movie with Harrison Ford in it. Lots of fighting, guns etc. He doesn't normally watch these sort of movies. By the end of the movie his skin had gone red, weepy and very itchy. Within a half hour of the movie finishing his skin had settled back down. – *Robin, Vic*

[704] Stress-related eczema (November 2008)

Like story [705] about the amine sensitive man who developed a rash while watching a suspenseful movie, my daughter broke out in a rash all over the other evening after a particularly intense tickling and chasing each other around the house squealing session with her father ... My eczema also flares up when I'm under stress. – *Cherie, WA*

[702] Diet not working 100 per cent - another soy intolerance story (November 2008)

We have had a major breakthrough with my nine-year-old daughter. Over a year ago we did the elimination diet for her and worked out what her intolerances were - severe for dairy, moderate to severe for salicylates, mild for amines and reacted to all the additives. I wrote to you some time back noting that my daughter who had finally started drinking soy milk (in fact she was guzzling it down), was bed wetting again and old behaviours were returning. You asked if she was OK with soy.

So we removed soy (or so we thought) and the bedwetting stopped, unless she consumed anything with soy flour in it. For the next year we lived with a much improved daughter but it niggled at me that she still didn't seem 100 per cent and I thought she could be better. When we eliminated gluten and wheat she always had good days but I couldn't bring myself to take these from her already restricted diet and she found this very hard to cope with. She also continued to suffer from eczema behind the knees and in creases, but nothing extreme. I saw the dietitian, thinking that maybe I had re-introduced salicylates too much too soon, but when she had her baddays, going back to failsafe did not always resolve the issue. The dietitian was great and gave me some RPAH booklets and some good advice about nutrition, but I knew I was missing something.

So I trawled the internet, did hours of research, contacted scientists and then went and saw my GP for a referral to an immunologist, hoping that maybe there was a detectable food allergy of some sort - how nice and straightforward that would have been! Of course nothing showed up in a skin prick test, but the immunologist was a full bottle on the intolerance issue and at least didn't think I was a complete nutter. He said that I could wear myself out trying to look for more intolerances but that I should be grateful we had achieved this level of success for her - no-one was perfect after all and I should appreciate how she was now.

It has only been because we are now trying to figure out my three-year-old daughter's eczema that we have finally put together the last piece in my nine-year-olds jigsaw. She had had a particularly bad couple of days: instructions in one ear and out the other, deliberately annoying, disobedient, room like a tip etc and I was re-exploring the fed up website looking for clues about eczema when I came across the story "13 years of soy intolerance" (story 314 from April 2004), which I had read before. That writer mentioned that he avoided Soy Lecithin 322, emulsifiers 476, 471, 492 and vegetable gums from soy and other beans (410, 412, 415, 416, 461) as well as chick peas and tofu, because many soy intolerant people have cross reactivity issues with soy derivatives and other legumes. Of course! I rushed to my cupboards and discovered that for the past year and a half I have been feeding her these things on a daily basis: 471 was in her Arnott's plain water crackers, the Canola puff pastry and the Baker's delight plain white iced finger buns and also in the brand of rice milk I was currently buying (Freedom Foods) because the Vitasoy rice milk was out of stock. In effect over the past week we had done an unintentional soy challenge because I had made chickpea dip from the Friendly Foods cook book, which she was practically drinking she loved it so much, my "Granny's Beef and Bean Soup", which contained chickpea and mung bean sprouts, lentils, kidney beans and butter beans, plus mince in pastry for dinner. Hallelujah! Because her intolerance to soy is mild, it took doses on a daily basis to cause problems and they were low level, unlike the obvious ones when she drank bucketloads of soy milk.

I wonder if other people have similar issues with soy that they are not yet aware of? The tricky thing is that even a mild intolerance will be an issue because these other things are in products typically consumed on a daily basis. Perhaps you could post something on the site in case they might want to explore this a bit more. For a long time I have felt, that I knew the diet was working but she wasn't as good as she could be. Could you find a way to thank the person who wrote story 314 who chose to share this information for the benefit of others? My daughter has always seemed a little upset that even though she was sticking to food that was Ok for her she was still having occasional bad days and getting in trouble at school, though nowhere near the scale of how she used to be. This information will be truly life altering for her (and us!) and I'd like him to know that his kindness in wanting to help others has made a difference in our lives, just as yours has Sue. - Cherie, WA (note that Nuttalex Original and Lite are free from soy the 471 is derived from vegetable oil and the lecithin 322 is derived from sunflower oil)

[700] One-liners (November 2008)

- I had a very bad reaction on moving into our new home (paint fumes, new flooring, new grouting/tiles etc etc). Little did I connect the two at the time, that wasn't until much later. I had severe eczema head to toe and my salicylate threshold went to near zero.' – *email*

[689] 220: Sulphites in wine cause eczema (November 2008)

Ever since I became pregnant with my first child 13 yrs ago, I have reacted to 220 sulphites. Especially in red wine, well actually any wine and a range of alcoholic drinks. Within half an hour I start sneezing heavily as if I am developing a cold. My throat then feels sore and my face reddens and becomes puffy. I have also linked 220 to eczema, which I have struggled with all my life. After refraining from 220, my incurable eczema vanished almost completely within days. Beware though! I have switched to preservative free wines. Happs is fine but some of the others which claim to be preservative-free still affect me. Reading the labels more closely, some only claim to have NO PRESERVATIVES ADDED. These wines still make me react. - *Jenny, NSW*

[673] Two naturopaths write about failsafe eating (2) (September 2008)

Our son has been progressively more moody and ADHD since 3 yrs-old and we couldn't understand why. We know now! We were used to wheat, dairy and numbers sensitivities and have worked with them in our family for years. Plenty of healthy foods. We had no idea about salicylates or amines and have had to shift from a diet abundant previously in fruits and veggies.

We haven't done well with elimination - most weekends since we started we have either been travelling or having birthday parties and have mucked up the diet - and even so we have seen great changes in our son. He has become quite the sleuth in reading labels and monitoring other children's lunches. He has been very compliant. Better than my husband who we've seen great changes in too.

My husband is a naturopath and worked a lot with sensitivities and this has unfolded a whole new awareness and interest for him. He has definitely seen proof in the salicylate/amine/number free pudding!!! My daughter's eczema is much better too than on the previous wheat and dairy free approach. My husband would like to incorporate this awareness into his work with clients and we shall get the DVD to show clients and family and friends. - *by email*

[654] 635: Flavour enhancers and a breastfed baby (September 2008)

Thomas was born a very healthy full term baby. A couple of days later he had little red pimples on his face that after two weeks became quite red and covered a quarter of his cheeks, Clinic nurses noted that it was a bad hormonal rash, but it never went away, it only got worse. Thomas was also an irritable baby needing feeding at least every two hours he didn't sleep for any more than 2 hours at a time.

With two other children and hubby to feed, time was precious, so I started whipping up quick casseroles to feed the family. In the casseroles I would put in meat and fresh veg I had in the fridge, and for the flavour we were used to I would throw in a packet of beef & veg cuppa soup and thicken it with Gravox. Things were going from bad to worse. Thomas was covered all over in a red rash. The doctor diagnosed eczema and gave creams for it but it only got worse and infected.

On one particular occasion I remember vividly, I made the casserole for dinner on Friday night, and while having a cuppa and chat next day noticed that Thomas became quite irritable and his little head came out in beads of sweat, which later became a crusty layer. It suddenly dawned on me that this happened every time I made the casserole, I would eat it about 6 pm and by 12-1 pm the next

day (18 hours later) this little time bomb would go off in Thomas. The next day Thomas was a ratty all day, his whole body was red and his scalp crusty.

When Thomas was 4 months old we got into a Dermatologist who listened to our story and nearly laughed at us and explained about Cuppa soup (flavour enhancers) and Gravox (salicylates) his words were 'it's like a time bomb'. We discovered from that trip that Thomas was allergic to dairy, eggs, peanuts, and probably intolerant to the nasty food colourings, preservatives and additives given his reaction to flavour enhancers and salicylates. Although he had never ingested these foods directly, he had got it all through my breast milk. Thomas was weaned onto Neocate Formula then to soy at 12 months of age. He has since developed allergies to soy, all nuts, potato, gluten, house dust, cats, dogs, horses, many grasses and weed pollen. He also suffers from asthma. He now drinks rice milk and is on a strict egg-free, dairy-free, nut-free, potato-free, gluten-free low salicylate diet. Now at six years of age Thomas is a healthy active boy despite all this.- *by email*.

[633] Severe eczema related to salicylates and fragrance (February 2008)

I posted very early on when this site first started with my son's story of very severe eczema (on the soles of his feet) which took three months to clear, and was related to salicylates. We started Failsafe though because of behavioural problems and had the added bonus of the eczema clearing up completely. He also reacts badly to heavy chemical fumes such as chlorine, ammonia etc (airborne salicylates).

Anyhow, recently he had a major behavioural reaction, I was absolutely sure it was not food related. He was attending Vacation Care at the time. Recently he came home and just happened to mention that one of the ladies had sprayed something on the table he was sitting at, and when he asked what it was, was told 'Don't worry Chris, it won't kill you' (grrrr from me - what if he had been asthmatic?). Anyhow I decided to investigate this, as I could find no food reason for the deterioration of his behaviour.

Turned out that they had been spraying Dettol (or something that smells very similar) on the lunch tables, and regularly spraying air fresheners. (I have since talked to them and they now make sure he is nowhere near when they are spraying stuff around, and he has been fine since).

Anyway, that was the same time he started complaining that his feet were sore - I checked and there was eczema on the soles of his feet again (first time in two years of being Failsafe). Just thought this might be helpful to some out there! It can be more than food! – Jenny, NT

[628] Asthma, eczema and frequent colds cleared up by avoiding additives (February 2008)

My 4 year-old daughter has had eczema and asthma since she was 12 months old. Once a month she would come down with a cold and have to use her Ventolin and she was constantly scratching at her skin. Six months ago I concentrated on removing preservatives and MSG from her diet, and have noticed a huge improvement. We have not had a cold since and her skin has cleared up. – Kate, by email

[546] One-liners (January 2007)

- I work in health and am constantly amazed that there is not more connection made to food related reactions as I can recognise them a mile off - asthma, eczema and so on. – email, NSW.
- Thank you so much for everything, without your work my family would still be wheezy, itchy, rashy, cranky and doped up on medication for all these ailments! – by email

[543] Covered in eczema at age of three (January 2007)

By the time she was three, my daughter was covered in eczema and watching videos all day as she couldn't keep up with other children. We now have a healthy five-year-old after one year on the diet. Her energy improved within three weeks of starting the diet. Reading your book was a comfort as I thought I knew lots about allergy and eczema. She had been on the healthiest foods: wheat free, sugar free, chiropractors, Chinese medicine, acupuncture, biocom, skin specialists ...

I was exhausted and pretty fed up when I started learning about failsafe foods. One year on we have a clear picture of what we can have and it is expanding every month. Sulphites, benzoates and salicylates are our main problems, but we stay off any preservatives and colours. Thank you for helping us. Reading your book helped me feel not so alone and laugh at some of the crazy mistakes I made. – *by email, South Australia*

[516] 635: Sitting in my lounge room sobbing (January 2006)

Although an eczema sufferer most of my early life (now 50 years old) in the past 12 months I have on different occasions developed a rash worse than anything I have ever experienced with eczema. I have been to dermatologists and allergists and found that I was severely allergic to the dust mite. In the past couple of months I changed all my bedding etc and have been free of rash.

On Saturday night I cooked apricot chicken. The welts on my body started to appear again on Sunday night. I finished the chicken for dinner on Monday evening not associating it with the rash. Last night I woke tearing my body to pieces. There were huge welts all over my torso, arms and upper legs. I was in a terrible state. It was 2 in the morning and I was sitting in my lounge room sobbing and distressed. I thought I had found the problem with the dust mite. This was however was something far worse.

I went into the kitchen and checked what I had eaten. I had read the article a few months previously on food enhancer 635. I checked the Continental french onion soup packet that I had used in the casserole. There was no mention of 635. I was totally distressed and at my wit's end. I went back to the soup packet and checked again and saw - food enhancer - ribonucleotides. I had kept the article on 635. I rushed to my purse and took out the article. There was the chemical name for 635 - the same as on the soup packet.

This is nothing short of criminal that the Food and Health departments will not ban this additive. To tear yourself to pieces, with huge welts on your body is the most demoralising thing I have ever experienced. Obviously this had caused problems for me previously and had gone undetected. Not only do I now have to wait for the welts to die down, I have scratched up my skin so badly it will take weeks for that to heal.

I am writing this in the hope that it may help in having this additive banned. Surely big business should not come first over the health and well being of Australians – Suzanne, Victoria.

[474] One-liners (November 2006)

- I first read Fed Up seven years ago when my then 3-year-old was suffering severe eczema. I started eliminating additives and colours and her eczema went in a week and has not returned.
- We solved my father-in-law's severe eczema after visiting your website. He was using Wintergreen and Deep Heat to relieve joint pain symptoms and dermatologist couldn't cure his problem at all. Since following the low salicylate diet, he is 100%. He cannot believe that the stiffness, aching joints and bad eczema have all disappeared.
- My three-year-old son has been on the diet for three months now and it has been a miracle for our family. He has no eczema, his behaviour is fantastic (the sweet gentle caring child I knew was hiding in there somewhere), his faeces are back to normal, he has not had a runny nose since starting the diet, no abdominal pain and he goes to sleep and sleeps all night with no night terrors (we were dealing with three or four a night). WOW, what a difference. We have found he is sensitive to amines and salicylates.

[451] Severe eczema and cradlecap in a fully breastfed baby (August 2006)

My two and a half year old daughter has had severe eczema and cradle cap since she was a few months old, I never made the connection between the eczema and food allergy because she wasn't even on solids when we first noticed the eczema. She was fully breastfed and I am embarrassed to admit that it didn't occur to me that what I ate may be causing the rash! I had her to the doctor plenty of times over her first two years and came away with all sorts of creams and lotions, but nothing that worked. (Mind you the doctor never once suggested food allergy either!)

Anyway six months ago she had an allergic reaction to peanut butter, we took her to an allergist who performed skin prick tests and not only is she anaphylactic to peanuts but also allergic to egg and tomato. We eliminated all nuts and egg and tomato from her diet and whilst she improved and her cradle cap went, her skin still didn't clear up. She still scratched a lot (mostly at night), got allergic shiners under her eyes, and always seemed to have a slight cough and a clear runny nose.

I recently got hold of Fed Up with the idea of doing the elimination diet then slowly introducing things back in to see what else may be causing her eczema. I am pleased to tell you that the eczema is now completely cleared up along with all the other symptoms simply due to avoiding all preservatives.

Before going fully failsafe we eliminated all those nasties from our diets and what a difference it has made! I just want to say thank you for what you do and for making it so much easier for parents like me, who 18 months ago had no idea what 160b or 282 were and thought I was giving my children healthy food with their yoghurt and cheese spread etc. I almost look at my daughter's anaphylactic allergy to peanuts a blessing in disguise, because if not for that I never would have investigated food allergies and would still be obliviously feeding my family all sorts of nasty things.

[449] 635: Severe rash due to 635, we didn't realize until we saw it on TV (August 2006)

My seven year old son recently developed a severe rash that covered all parts of his body after he had tried salt and vinegar chips for the first time. However we did not realise this until we saw you on Today Tonight and realised he had never had these chips before. When the rash had almost gone (it was completely covering his back, stomach and groin) he went to his nannas and had Arnotts chicken crimpy and crispy bacon biscuits (which we now know contain 635). He came home covered in a severe rash this time on his legs. He was scratching it so badly that he made his legs bleed.

I was going crazy trying to figure out what was causing it until I saw your segment. I am very grateful to you for solving this problem for me as the medication was getting expensive and I was getting nowhere with the doctors. On the first visit for the initial rash I was told he had hives and given two types of medication that didn't work so we went back. Then we were told he had eczema and we were given a different medication. This one was working until he had the chicken crimpys and the rash came back in a different area.

[437] Amines and eczema (August 2006)

I am now 46, and have lived for most of those years with dreadful eczema all over my body, sometimes much worse than others. I went to many skin specialists, all who told me that diet was not linked, not to scratch, bathe in the sea when possible, not to use harsh soaps and apply cortisone creams. My eczema never got any better. I started the elimination diet a few years ago with my daughter, who suffers migraines, and not only did her headaches decrease, but my eczema also faded to almost nothing! Amines were the trigger for her migraines, and with keeping off amine rich foods in our house, I have not had any eczema problems since, and I no longer need to apply creams to any parts of my body. What a relief!

[433] Preservatives including sulphites (July 2006)

"I have a 3 year old son who was diagnosed with eczema around the 12 month mark. He started having rashes when he was put on solids but nothing too serious. Last year we took him to a skin specialist who told us his condition was very mild and prescribed cortisone (Elocon). When we asked for allergy testing, she told me it was not caused by foods. Fourteen months and a few tubes of Elocon later, his condition was very bad. He would scratch himself in his sleep to the point of bloodstains on the sheets and had problems staying asleep. His skin was permanently scarred and bloody because of scratching the same spots so they never had a chance to heal. I was in despair and did not know what to do especially as I took him to my GP and he again refused to do anything other than prescribe Elocon."

Eventually this mother decided to try diet for herself and contacted the Food Intolerance Network through our website. Through cutting down on additives she found that preservatives were the main culprit and wrote:

"Since we took him off additives and preserved foods (eg lollies, juice, sausages), his skin has improved very well. He stopped scratching and started to sleep through the night. Then on Saturday he had half a sausage and bam, itching and redness started within 30 minutes. Luckily it only lasted a

few hours and again yesterday we went to a party and against my better judgment I let him have orange juice and soft drink and same thing happened.

"Because I now know exactly what he eats, it is easy to pinpoint the cause. I am disappointed with our medical practitioners, the so called specialists, especially the one who saw my son last year and put him on steroids. I have become an avid label reader and when I explained to my 3 year old why he cannot have all the stuff he normally loves, he surprised me with how well he is coping."

[432] Eczema and sulphites again (July 2006)

My daughter developed eczema when she was being introduced to solid foods at about 6 months but I didn't take her to the doctor for another year and then we managed it with eczema cream until we went travelling when she was two. The eczema got much worse while we were travelling and eventually we tried the elimination diet. We went gluten free right from the start and at first she got much worse. It took us months to work out that she was sensitive to many food chemicals but especially sulphites, which were in gluten free flours and also in the bore water on our property. I was also using a herbal cream that was making her eczema worse. She is very sensitive and reacts to Sorbolene, and smells like Estapol.

[431] My daughter gets eczema and asthma from salicylates (July 2006)

When my daughter was two I noticed that her eczema seemed to flare up after I had given her spaghetti one day or two before. I asked my dietitian if it could be tomatoes and she said "yes - it can be salicylates". So I stopped giving her spaghetti and tomatoes thinking this would solve the problem however she still had eczema so I just treated it. When she turned three years old she started getting asthma, about every month and when she had a virus or a cold. My daughter always only drank water or milk but at her Kindy Christmas Party we had to give her some cordial to drink because there wasn't anything else and that night she had asthma. The same thing happened a month later after she had a raspberry fruit drink. My doctor just told me how to treat the asthma so I went to my dietitian. She prescribed vitamin supplements and took my daughter off dairy which reduced the frequency and severity of the asthma but made the eczema worse. It took a couple of months for me to realize that I was mixing the vitamin powder in orange juice, then the dietitian gave me a list of all the foods that contained salicylates so I could avoid them. A few weeks after we started avoiding salicylates, my daughter's skin started clearing up. So you can see the pattern with the tomatoes, fruit juice and orange cordial with real fruit juice – reader by email.

[416] Eczema is so much better (May 2006)

My eldest son suffers terribly from eczema and while we have dabbled in diets in the past they were too difficult and the people who gave them to us seemed to be peddling their own vitamins and supplements! My son's allergist recently suggested a diet along with the RPA and your books. Boy oh boy even after three days we could see the difference. He has now been on the diet for four weeks and as his eczema is so much better as well as his general skin condition. – reader, NSW

[409] One-liners (March 2006)

- I recently watched a pre-diet video of my boys taken 3 years ago and in it my oldest son was covered in eczema and scratching. Now, he only gets eczema if he comes into contact with an allergen - eg certain types of grass - or eats something he shouldn't.

[399] Reflux medication causes ADHD symptoms and the Parkinsons shake (March 2006)

Having four children who have all been milk and soy intolerant from birth, intolerant to artificial additives and sensitive to levels of salicylates and amines I've seen possibly every symptom food intolerance can produce raise its ugly head at some time or another. Unfortunately due to either being uneducated or narrow-minded, many mainstream medical practitioners including specialists just wouldn't go the food intolerance path so it took me several years to really get to the bottom of what was happening with my children.

The first symptoms that we came up against were reflux, eczema and a lot of skin rashes. My third child, Jessica, was extremely miserable and seemed to be in a lot of pain. She'd started refluxing from one week and was started on prescription medications. Luckily the paediatrician was able to identify a rash around her bottom as being associated with lactose intolerance so we went the road of trying various formulas until we got to nutramigen which settled her demeanour but did nothing to alleviate the reflux side of things, so we had unwittingly started down the right path. She also had a constant post nasal drip from very early on so we were shovelling her full of various antihistamine type medicines trying to alleviate that and she had eczema. My fourth child Zac knew that breast milk just wasn't for him so at two weeks he decided to starve himself in preference, refusing the breast. He also was covered in eczema and had silent reflux. Luckily for him he was put straight on to neocate, for during the couple of years leading up to his birth, our family paediatrician who by this point had all four of my children in his care had seen the flurry of symptoms food intolerance can produce.

As my eldest child Levi was still on syrup medication for reflux until just before he started school, his paediatrician felt it would be a good idea to see how he went, off medication. I was able to get him through with the occasional dose of over the counter antacid for a couple of months until he started school when his reflux exacerbated, so the prescription medication was reintroduced. I took him for his paediatric review a few days later and was told to start him on a prescription syrup antacid as well as he'd been complaining of heartburn symptoms. Within 3 days something was going wrong. His teacher asked me what had happened to him, he was bouncing off the walls and displaying ADHD symptoms, being loud and disruptive. I rang his paediatrician and told her that I was taking him off the prescription antacid and told her what was happening. But things were going down hill fast, his ADHD symptoms were becoming worse, his coordination had plummeted and he'd lost all sense of balance (which had never been a problem in the past), he'd fall over for no apparent reason, there were times that he would behave like he was drunk or high, giggling and slouching, and his eyes would zip from side to side really quickly (I was told the medical term, I think it was nystagmus...)

To top it off, Jessica, had started doing the parkinsons shake (she was still refluxing terribly and was also on both Zantac and Prepulsid syrup medications). Levi's teacher asked me to have him assessed by an Occupational Therapist who diagnosed him as having dyspraxia, a developmental condition

that makes them have to have constant repetition as they have to relearn everything over and over because they can't retain it. I knew that it wasn't a developmental problem as he had always been in advance of his age appropriate milestones and I'd spent lots of time with him, he could climb trees, jump, skip, ride a bike without training wheels from 3 years old, and had great hand eye coordination prior to this happening. All of that coupled with the ADHD stuff just wasn't right. So I made an appointment for the paediatrician (his regular paediatrician wasn't available so I asked for the one that was now looking after my other 2 children). He was dumbfounded. He'd remembered seeing Levi from time to time when I'd had to go for appointments with the others and he didn't have a clue what was going on. So he ordered several blood tests, a CAT scan and an EEG. Everything came back clear. I remember saying to him at that stage that it had all started when the syrup antacid was introduced but I couldn't understand why it was still happening. I of course got a Tsk Tsk for pointing my finger at the medication. So I battled onwards for a couple of months, racking my brain, I rang the reflux support group and the lady I talked to said that her son who was on these medications was also ADHD. I was at my wits end, Levi's symptoms were getting worse, I resorted to ringing the drug company who manufactured the antacid and talked to one of the medics who worked in the lab. She told me that she had heard of this sort of thing happening before and that it was probably due to the alcohol, or the preservatives and flavourings used in the medicine as they are really concentrated in ALL syrup medications. BINGO. Now I was facing a dilemma. How could I treat my children's reflux without the medications, I could see what it was doing to my kids - all 3 were on the same medications. I found a naturopath who made a tonic catering for my children's reflux symptoms. In a matter of weeks I was able to control the older 2 with the herbal treatment alone. Within 7 weeks Levi's ADHD had settled down, his balance and coordination had returned and when we saw the neurologist at this point he agreed that Levi's problems were due to the preservatives and flavourings in the medications and felt that he was a normal 5 year old. Funnily enough Jessica was cured of the parkinsons shake and Levi stopped falling over.

I at that stage really started to read labels. With careful monitoring I was able to avoid foods that contained artificial colourings, flavourings and preservatives so the kids reflux and behaviour was settling down. At this time you could buy rice milk and oat milk as an alternative to cow's milk and soy so the reflux for the 3 older ones was controlled purely by diet alone. I was able to see symptoms occurring when they'd eat a particular food or have a drink of juice. Jess was still in a flurry with the post nasal drip which would cause a persistent cough where she could barely catch a breath in between. At our next appointment with the paediatrician (I now had only Jess and Zac going), I told him about what foods would cause what symptom and he suggested going into the RPA clinic. So off we trotted, it was a big day that day, we found out Levi was anaphylaxis to peanut (I'd known he was mildly allergic and avoided it entirely) and I was educated about salicylates and amines. We did the elimination diet and with the reintroduction of certain foods it caused chaos. We lived a couple of years of pretty bland, I've found that they certainly improve with age, but I still have to be pretty strict with what Jess and Zac eat.

When Zac was two he was taken off the neocate. Our paediatrician suggested a follow on formula that was cow's milk based but the protein was broken down into small chains. Within days the poor child was on the tantrum rollercoaster, throwing tantrums which generally lasted around half an

hour at a time, where he'd hurt himself, belt into things, bash anyone who was around, and he'd have 6 to 8 of these a day. I was genuinely concerned that he was going to hurt himself or someone else. I rang the paediatrician (by now I was well and truly on a first name basis) and told him that I wasn't giving him any more formula and that he'd have to get by on rice milk. Now you can get calcium enriched and vitamin enriched rice milk so that's somewhere else to go if you need to.

I've also seen dairy cause speech problems (this happened to Zac when he was on the follow on formula), tantrums, dyslexia (they can't get their tongue around words, mirror write letters and misspell words), very pale skin complexion, behavioural problems, ADHD symptoms, along with the gutty symptoms, reflux, eczema, and postnasal drip and that's just in my children. I understand that dairy and wheat are now being looked at as being causes for mild autism.

If you're at your wits end, if your child displays any of these symptoms or has a learning difficulty especially if there's something happening with each of your kids, even if their symptoms are different, food intolerance is worth looking into. It runs in families. Dietary modification may be the answer you're looking for. My children are now medication free. If your GP doesn't want to go there, find a doctor that will. You need to be strong and assertive because you're going to encounter a lot of doctors and specialists who think it's all a crock, but you have to ask yourself why are there so many kids with ADHD, behavioural problems, learning difficultiesunfortunately a lot of the food you buy from the supermarket has artificial additives, for the sals and amine intolerant remember that a lot of the fruits and veg that years ago were seasonal are now available all year round not to mention what they do to them to ripen them and keep them fresh, and for the dairy intolerant look to your genes for the answers, there are several races that are known can't tolerate dairy. It may just change your life. - Sandra Madden, Heathcote NSW smadden@iprimus.com.au (Sandra now coaches children with dyslexia and learning difficulties and is happy to hear from others, please put food intolerance in the subject line)

[376] One liners (July 2005)

My son's eczema started when we introduced solids – having started reading your book I can see all kinds of foods he currently eats which may be causing a reaction so we're about to try the elimination diet.

We have been on the failsafe diet for nearly three and have had excellent results for the whole family - I have had no pre-menstrual migraines, my 18 month old's eczema all but disappeared and my three year old's behaviour has changed dramatically.

[368] One liners (March 2005)

As for convincing my family that diet is important, we would show them the eczema the day it looked the worst, and they would be convinced! – by email, Sydney

[363] Vulnerable new mothers (March 2005)

Before the diet, my son presented with headaches, itchy skin (in elbows, on legs, usually scratching until it bleeds), black circles under his eyes, "jumpy" behaviour, irritability, day and night pants wetting, pains in the tummy and awful loose bowel motions, blocked ears and sleep apnoea as well

as incessant snorting and inability to breathe at night. As a baby he had eczema, colic, could not sleep and fussed with breast milk from 4 months ... somebody needs to support vulnerable new mothers to help their fussy kids, not make it worse by shoving disguised dairy foods (or whatever the particular issue is) down their throats, and then advise the mother to let them scream it out because they obviously have us fooled with sleeping and behaviour problems! – by email

[360] 282: Biting related to bread preservative (March 2005)

I put my nearly two year old daughter on the failsafe diet about 18 months ago for her severe eczema. Since her symptoms were so bad we went gluten free as well but she actually got worse. It wasn't until she improved on the wheat challenge that I realized the sulphites in the gluten free flours had been affecting her. She still didn't come completely right and eventually we realized she was affected by sulphites in our bore water (we live on a farm). Then about three weeks ago I gave her a Pascall's white marshmallow and after a two hour sleep she woke with a very itchy rash covering a large part of her body. I believe it was caused by the sulphites in the gelatine in that one marshmallow. Since then we have stopped her sago and soy icecream (due to the sulphites in sago and gelatine) and I believe she is now completely sulphite free. Her skin is now perfect. – reader, Qld

[338] ONE LINERS (July 2004)

* My son is just turning the corner with his severe eczema thanks to a new allergist and your food!

[318] Chronic eczema (April 2004)

My 3-year-old daughter developed eczema at the age of six months when I introduced solids and by 8 months she needed frequent cortisone cream. The doctor said she would grow out of it, but every time I stopped using the cortisone cream the eczema would start again within 4 days. Now her eczema is so close to being gone that we are just waiting for some healed areas to disappear. Her legs are smooth and so are her arms except for a couple of tiny spots. She would still be covered in eczema if it wasn't for your books and all the heaps of help and reassurance you have given me. I've been close to tears and felt like giving up several times, but I couldn't let her suffer, I had to keep persevering. How do you say thank you for giving a child the opportunity to live a 'normal' life. - reader, NSW.

[310] Asthma and eczema due to salicylates (December 2003)

Since we discovered salicylates, my daughter doesn't need preventative medication anymore although I have made a few slip ups with her diet. Every time she has a reaction I look at what she has eaten and it is always salicylates. For example, she had a reaction to rissoles in the early stages of the diet before I had your books to help me. My dietitian said, 'Did you put pepper in the rissoles?' I hadn't realised pepper was high in salicylates and used it automatically. Last year I bought some "Kids Bananas" from Coles because my daughter never ate more than half of the usual big Cavendish bananas. Two days later her eczema had flared up and then she got asthma. By this time she had eaten three of these bananas. They must have been sugar bananas which are high in salicylates but I didn't know that at the time. During that attack she had to go back on her preventer medication as well as Ventolin but she hasn't needed it since. - Qld

[306] Instant answer to my boys' asthma and eczema (December 2003)

I just want to thank you for doing what you do. When a friend of mine heard you speak in Launceston and brought me back info, I felt that, at last, someone was speaking my language.

Where none of the health professionals had been of much help, I instantly found answers to my boys' asthma and eczema. I got the cookbook and your asthma book a few weeks ago and am so pleased to have found solid, real, useful guidelines to help our family. We haven't done the full elimination diet yet but with the knowledge I gained from your books I was able to retrace which foods did what. The cause of my 3 year old's asthma became obvious (sulphites) when he would eat something out of the ordinary such as 2 apricot fruit bars (which he had not eaten in ages), come home, run around outside and have an asthma attack, which he has not had in ages. My 9-month-old son obviously reacts to salicylates. He's had eczema from birth and when I introduced solids, pumpkin, carrots and prunes gave him asthma soon after he ate them.

I only wish every hospital, health care clinic and GP had your books! - Elisa Dickinson, Tasmania

[295] Acne rosacea responds to failsafe (September 2003)

We started the failsafe diet in May 2002 after advice from a friend and it has had many interesting 'side effects', all of them good. We have had the usual wonderful behavioural changes in all members of the family and I don't know if anyone else has reported this but if I stay 100% failsafe my acne rosacea goes (the scars don't but makeup covers them). I have taken many drugs for over the last 15 years for this condition and now I find that all forms of dairy give me pimples and cysts while flavour enhancers start up the vein ridden, red and sore rosacea. I am 34 now and don't want to look hideous in public any longer.- Viv, ACT

[288] Finding out about asthma and food chemicals (September 2003)

What you say in your book 'Fed Up with Asthma' about food intolerances making the airways sensitive to triggers like viruses is what happened to my daughter. She is intolerant to salicylates, although it took a long time for me to find out. When she was two years old, I had noticed that her eczema seemed to flare up a day or two after eating spaghetti. I mentioned this to a dietitian I was seeing for other health problems. She said that it could be salicylates, so I stopped giving my daughter spaghetti and tomatoes, but she still had eczema. Then when she turned three, she started getting asthma. The doctor always said that the asthma was triggered by a virus but there were times where she would get asthma without having a virus first.

At the Child Care/Kindy Christmas Party, the only thing they had to drink was cordial. My daughter had never had any fruit juice or cordial to drink up to this time, only water or milk, but we gave her half a cup of cordial to drink because she was thirsty and we hadn't brought any drinks with us. That night she had asthma. About a month later her father gave her a Winnie the Pooh Raspberry fruit drink and she also had asthma that night. When I told the doctor about this, she said did I think it was the colour? but didn't do anything, just told me about treatment.

My daughter was now getting asthma every month and needing stronger medication so I went back to the dietitian who prescribed vitamin supplements and took her off dairy foods. My daughter

continued to get asthma and her eczema got worse, and this is how I found out about salicylates. The dietitian had told me to mix the powdered supplements in fruit juice and one of the child care centre workers mentioned that oranges can be a problem. It finally 'clicked'. I had been mixing the vitamins in orange juice. I got the dietitian to send me a list of all the foods that were salicylates so I could avoid them. After a few weeks my daughter's skin started clearing up and she has never had asthma again, even when she had a bad flu this winter. Dairy products give her the odd ear infection, less than once a year, but they don't affect her asthma.- reader, Brisbane

[276] Dermatitis from formaldehyde in car steering wheel (September 2003)

I have always been prone to skin irritations since I was a little girl. During my mid teens in the 60s I contracted quite bad dermatitis on the backs of my hands. This manifested itself on the palms of my hands too, at times, and no-one seemed to be able to discover the cause of the irritation, the resulting blisters and weeping skin. Skin specialists recommended various creams and potions including tar ointments, pure lanolin, various other forms of similar creams and ultimately full strength cortisone ointment which seemed to be the only thing that reduced the itch and the inflammation. I continued to use the cortisone ointment on my hands from that time until only a few years back when I decided to speak to a dermatologist here in Canberra. During the period of those years my hands fluctuated in the severity of irritation, sometimes really bad, and at other times less severe.

The dermatologist did a skin patch test in which I had to leave various substances on my skin for a week without touching or removing the patches. During that week I returned to the dermatologist on the Wednesday and the Friday to check the reactions. On the Wednesday there were two substances that had caused a slight pink spot on my skin. However, by the Friday these two had increased in redness and another one had begun to cause inflammation of the skin.

The three offending chemicals turned out to be:

Formaldehyde - used in large amounts in many plastic industries, building materials, eg paints, glues, varnishes, some pesticides. It is also found in small amounts in cosmetics, eg creams, shampoos, make-up, nailpolish, new fabrics and clothes, high quality paper, house-hold cleaners, disinfectants and in smoke from cigarettes or fires.

Quaternium-15 found in creams, lotions, shampoos, and other cosmetics and skin care products.

Colophony - found in adhesives, sealants, shoe wax, lacquers, gums, varnishes, pine oil cleaners, cosmetics, wart remedies, skiwax, dental floss, modelling clay, paints, resins, athletic rubs, and many industrial products. High quality gloss paper may be coated with colophony.

Well! We came to the conclusion that my chronic dermatitis of the hands (at this stage, and certainly consistently since my late teens) was caused by contact with resin steering wheels. The irritation was particularly obvious during the hot summer months. During the week following my diagnosis I wore cotton gloves when driving. I have had no recurrence of the problem since then (approximately 7 years now). My car has a pure sheepskin steering wheel cover - my husband can't stand the feel of it,

yet I can't stand to drive the car without it. I must admit I was amazed to discover the cause after all those years! - by email, Canberra

[254] 635: No one could give me an answer (April 2003)

I'm 50 years old. Although an eczema sufferer most of my early life, in the past 12 months I have on different occasions developed a rash worse than anything I have ever experienced with eczema.

I have been to dermatologists and allergists and found that I was severely allergic to the dust mite. In the past couple of months I changed all my bedding etc and have been free of rash.

On Saturday night I cooked apricot chicken. The welts on my body started to appear again on Sunday night. I finished the chicken for dinner on Monday evening not associating it with the rash. Last night I woke tearing my body to pieces. There were huge welts all over my torso, arms and upper legs. I was in a terrible state. It was two in the morning and I was sitting in my lounge room sobbing and distressed. I thought I had found the problem with the dust mite. This was however was something far worse.

I went into the kitchen and checked what I had eaten. I had read the article previously on food enhancer 635. I checked the Continental French onion soup packet that I had used in the casserole. There was no mention of 635. I was totally distressed and at my wit's end. I went back to the soup packet and checked again and saw 'flavour enhancer (ribonucleotides)'. I had kept the article on 635. I rushed to my purse and took out the article. There was the chemical name for 635 - the same as on the soup packet.

At least I now feel a little relieved to know what has been causing these periodic chronic outbursts of welts. I can try and avoid these foods.

The allergist I went to only a couple of months ago knew nothing of 635 until I told him of the article in The Herald Sun. He had tested me for everything else but not for 635. I am astounded that they are unaware of this problem. I have been going to doctors for the past 18 months, whenever I flared up. No-one could give me an answer.

This is nothing short of criminal that the Food and Health departments will not ban this additive. To tear yourself to pieces, with huge welts on your body is the most demoralising thing I have ever experienced. Obviously this had caused problems for me previously and had gone undetected. Not only do I now have to wait for the welts to die down, I have scratched up my skin so badly it will take weeks for that to heal. Surely big business should not come first over the health and well being of Australians. - Sue, Vic

[208] 282: Extreme eczema from the bread preservative (September 2002)

I realise you must be inundated with people contacting you about your research but I would like to personally acknowledge and thank you for your perseverance in bringing food sensitivities to the attention of the medical profession.

My three-year-old son, Jack, is a classic example of a reaction to preservative 282, except he also gets telltale extreme eczema, usually on his stomach and folds of legs and arms, which he scratches until it bleeds. It has been the latter symptoms that has made the effects of 282 so easy to identify in the end, after three years of spending thousands of dollars on medical specialists, allergy testing, cortisone cream, antihistamines and every type of traditional and alternative remedy available to mankind.

When my cousin introduced me to your book it was an absolute godsend. I was at the point where on many days I could have easily have put my son up for adoption. He was uncontrollable, irrational, stubborn and virtually beside himself with frustration and irritated skin.

My main frustration now is getting people to accept that this is Jack's problem, as so many people 'boo hoo' it as nonsense that it's related to food, and will often be found giving him these foods regardless of what I say. The other irritant for Jack is antioxidants used in cooking oils.

If you ever need a subject to test these out on, Jack would be ideal due to the tangible nature of his reaction.

Good luck with communicating this to the community at large. - by email, from Sydney

[020] Asthma, eczema, sinus, mood (October 1999)

I am writing to thank you very much for your book 'Fed Up', and to say that our family has been on this diet since August 98. By eating 'failsafe' we have experienced great improvements in our family life. During this time my son has ceased using asthma medications, and his eczema, mood swings, behaviour, tiredness, and sinus problems have disappeared. He is now a happy, healthy and settled child. - mother of six year old, Melbourne

Some recent failsafe facebook threads on this topic for those who are members:

http://www.facebook.com/groups/128458328536/permalink/10151703262683537/?comment_id=10151704491558537&offset=0&total_comments=71

http://www.facebook.com/groups/128458328536/permalink/10151699425438537/?comment_id=10151703272128537&offset=0&total_comments=35

http://www.facebook.com/groups/128458328536/permalink/10151699633028537/?comment_id=10151700791558537&offset=0&total_comments=64

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/128458328536/permalink/10151699700868537/>

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