

Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

www.fedup.com.au

("282:", "propionate" and "bread preservative" keywords only)

Note that 282 is the food additive number for calcium propionate. Avoid all forms of propionate 280-283.

[1302] Range of withdrawal symptoms - facebook thread (February 2015)

Our entire family went on an elimination diet seven years ago because of behaviour issues with our second son (who has oppositional defiance disorder) and to our surprise, our eldest son's behaviour got really, really bad - it turns out he was having withdrawals from the artificial ingredients. By the end of the three weeks I had four calm children and when introducing foods I noticed that the eldest is affected by artificial colours (102 especially - it's evil!), as well as the bread preservative 282, and the second son reacts to amines (gets the ODD symptoms!) and salicylates (vocal tics). Hang in there! – Michelle

[1296] 282: "the meltdowns and self harming stopped the next day" (December 2014)

My daughter has always been a little bit of a 'wired' child. She had eczema until she was 3 and many strange rashes after eating that came and went. However, all of this was quite manageable and she was otherwise a healthy, happy kid. Then, when she was 4 years old she overnight became utterly unmanageable. Her slight anxiety blew out of control, she was melting down 4-10 times a day over tiny things, she was disagreeable, angry and miserable (this was a child that never did the terrible twos or was a tantrum thrower). Nothing in our home life had changed, nothing seemed different except her. She was repeatedly saying terrible negative things that I never expected to hear from a small child. Worst of all, she started hurting herself during these melt downs. She would tear and her skin all up her arms until it bled, she would bite her arms until she bruised them and rip her hair out. I was completely lost.

I went to the GP who referred me to a paediatrician. He took it fairly seriously given its sudden onset and ordered a ream of tests. Waiting for the results seemed to take forever and in my desperation I was reading everything I could find. Somewhere, somehow I came across information about child behaviour and food intolerances and was directed to the FedUp website. I searched my brain. Was anything different in our diet in the 8 weeks she had been like this? We didn't eat much packaged food anyway - but YES. Since the beginning of that year I had been buying a different 'healthy looking' gluten free commercial sliced bread for my daughters lunch (we never had much bread as I'm coeliac). She had been having this bread almost every day and her consumption of it coincided perfectly with the onset of this behaviour. I ran to the kitchen - I just knew it must have this 282 preservative I'd been reading about. It did and I threw it in the bin. The meltdowns and self harming stopped the next day, three days before we re-visited the paediatrician to be told there was nothing wrong with her and that it was a parenting issue.

Since that time we have had only two re-emergences of this awful, awful behaviour, only ever mildly and short lived (it's coming up to two years now since this horror 8 weeks of my life). Further investigation has shown she is sensitive to some degree to natural food chemicals, particularly

amines and we limit those. I have never had the guts to retest her with anything with 282 in it and am happy to never have it in my house as long as I live.

When I saw those awful statistics about young kids and self harm I felt sick. This is on the rise just like all allergies and mental health conditions are on the rise. I had to share my story and hope it can help someone else or get action - Kylie by email.

[1274] One-liners (August 2014)

Eliminating 282 (also known as calcium propionate or cultured dextrose) from my diet almost completely eliminated my migraines :-) - Deborah by email.

[1231] Aspergers thread from facebook group (October 2013)

My ex-husband had/has Aspergers and when I was able to limit those foods which i knew had negative effect he was a lot more emotionally and socially connected - however as an adult who refused to acknowledge the diagnosis or that FS can work he would often eat foods he was 'addicted to' (bread with 282 was his major addiction).... I honestly believe that if he reduced those foods he was able to cope a lot better – facebook member

[1184] Diet "instead of living in a war-torn home" (February 2013)

I have found Fed Up to be amazing, a real eye opener. My daughter is 28 months old, and I now know that my daughter has Oppositional defiance. What a relief as I thought I was going to go insane with her. We have made a few changes with avoiding anything with 160b and 282 in bread and the difference already has been amazing. Now I want to undertake the elimination diet under supervision as I also have an 11 month old son who I know will also benefit. The book has really opened my eyes and has inspired my partner and I to push forward to get the best from our kids instead of living in a war-torn home. The work you are all doing is amazing so please keep up the good work. You have given me belief that life will get better and that the kids will have a better quality of life, because from small changes we can already see it happening so I can only imagine once we have completed the elimination diet the benefits we will receive. Thank you sooo much. – Gloria

[1166] 282: Defiant, hyperactive, impossible to reason with, plain silly, very loud, noisy, annoying to others, demanding, pushy and tantrums (December 2012)

My daughter, who is now 7 years old and who began the failsafe approach at age 3, reacts in the following ways whenever she has 282 in bread. She becomes defiant, hyperactive, impossible to reason with, plain silly, very loud, noisy, annoying to others, demanding, pushy, and if something doesn't go her way...watch out...fully blown tantrum including slamming doors, storming out the house, screaming, yelling, crying that goes on for a long time. Can't and won't follow simple instructions, becomes distracted easily, goes off track and off task, becomes destructive She also finds settling at night really difficult ... can't seem to switch off. The next day she realizes that it was the 282 that made her feel that way ... and she genuinely can't refrain from behaving in this way. We are pleased though that as she grows her reactions seem to be becoming slightly less severe. I think this has to do with more careful diet, increased body weight, and increased maturity on her part.

Prior to going failsafe, life was unbearable. She had night terrors every night for 4 years etc, etc, etc. We made many trips to specialists and psychologists and others, with no explanation as to why we

had a totally uncontrollable child. We chose to try Failsafe before we filled the prescription for Ritalin that we had been given, and thankfully it worked!

Thanks to your book, Fed Up, we have seen incredible results and are now on track. - Debbie, Victoria

[1163] 282: Grumpy and Rude, lacking concentration (from 2006)

I have been following the failsafe food guide and have had tremendous success. Today however after having a child for the past 3 weeks back to being Grumpy and Rude, lacking concentration, disruptive whenever possible and just not being nice, I discovered that the 'healthy' wraps we have been eating are now putting 282 in their product. After speaking to them they could not guarantee that 282 has not found its way into unmarked wraps.

We are not junk food people and have never encouraged that type of eating by our boys. We have found things that are considered the good foods affect our son and your books and information have helped us work out what he can and can not have. So when you find a product that has been great and they change it without telling you it is a pain and has had an effect on the whole family. Our son's teacher could not believe the negative change in him over the past 3 to 4 weeks towards his concentration and focus on his school work. - Cherie, Qld

[1162] 282: And oppositional defiance (from FAILsaf19 June 2000)

I have recently joined the Failsafe Fan Club after watching the Current Affair special. You'll be pleased to know that all of my local bookstores immediately sold out of "Fed Up" and several orders were placed.

I was so frustrated to not be able to get my hands on a copy of the book, the symptoms that the children described were identical to things my daughter has been experiencing for the past year, voices in her head, a motor that never stopped running, hating herself and others, arguing with adults, and a worsening learning delay.

I logged on to your web page, read all the newsletters, made a manual list of all the readily available Failsafe products, printed off the additives to avoid, and immediately eliminated preservatives and colourings from my pantry and my shopping list.

The most obvious reaction has been the elimination of the bread preservative 282. We have had a breadmaker for 12 months now but had recently become lazy and had reverted back to using commercial breads. I could never understand how my daughter could be an angel for one whole day and then spend the next 5 days angry and sullen. The Reader's Stories showed me that preservative 282 could be the culprit. I am now only using Laucke's pre-mix in my breadmaker or commercial bread without 282. My daughter's Oppositional Defiant Disorder has disappeared within a week. My husband and I were so dumbfounded when we issued an instruction last weekend - expecting it to be completely ignored, followed by a stormy argument - to have my daughter jump up, reply "Yes, Mummy, sorry I didn't hear you the first time", carry out the task and then return to her play. We sat and looked at each with stupid grins on our faces for a full five minutes. - reader, by email

[1154] 282: Bread preservative and seizures, extreme sleep disturbance, 'out-of-control' behaviour (October 2012)

I have a 2 year old son whose diet I have recently changed due to the behavioural problems that we were experiencing with him. My son was a big bread eater. While I was pregnant with him I was eating 10 slices of bread a day with 282 bread preservative and by the age of 18 months my son was eating the same amount. He was always a very difficult sleeper and has been having seizures since he was 18 months old. Since changing his diet to preservative free bread , he has gone from a monster to a reasonably placid child, he sleeps well, and his seizures have improved remarkably. Update: in the last 6 months he has had only three seizures. – by email, NSW

[1140] 282, 621: Muscle spasms due to bread preservative, MSG, salicylates, amines (October 2012)

My classic symptoms are fatigue and pain as well as massive muscle spasm where I get severely "locked up". My muscles go rigid (praying mantis style), mainly my arms and legs are affected. Sometimes even my facial muscles and tongue when it is severe. I can't walk or feed myself when this happens. It happens in degrees and lasts for different lengths of times. Sometimes just my fingers and toes curl. Always my muscles spasms are preceded by pain and almost always severe fatigue and a fuzzy head. When they are really bad I also get tinnitus. My hands go red and hot and very sensitive.

My muscle spasms have been heavily investigated by numerous neurologists - and I mean, numerous! - 20 at a hospital movement disorder clinic and another 5-6 independent ones. When I didn't fit into their pigeon hole definitions, I was then referred on three occasions to 3 different psychiatrists. They all pronounced me mentally healthy except one of them said, "That since there is no known neurological cause for my spasms, that he must conclude that it is psychological" and that I should just demedicalise and try and get on with my life.

When a friend recommended the RPA allergy clinic, I was adamant that food could not cause such a drastic reaction and I started the elimination diet extremely skeptical and determined to prove them wrong. Now I realize that I've always had some food intolerance (family history) as a young child when I used to get aching legs and be so extremely hyperactive at school that the teachers would send me for a run around the school grounds before they let me sit in their classes even in Year 12! Two bouts of glandular fever (at 18 then again at 21) then lowered my tolerance even further.

Since the elimination diet, I've discovered the main triggers are 282 [preservative calcium propionate used in bread] and MSG [flavour enhancer 621]. In 1.5 hours flat after ingesting bread preservative I am in severe spasm with all my classic symptoms! MSG has about a 3-4 hour time lag. The spasms used to last 30 mins - 1 hour (basically till my muscles fatigue) but now that I've virtually eliminated the diet factor and I am so much better and fitter, when I do accidentally eat 282 or MSG then they can last up to almost 4 hours full spasm. My husband doesn't have a hope of moving my arms or legs, they're so rigid. He said that even if I tried myself I could not be so strong other than when I'm in spasm.

Salicylates cause my hot hands and pain but have a delayed effect causing me to spasm only after a while (2-3 days). Amines also have a delayed effect, first causing hyperactivity/insomnia then pain but rarely spasm.

The elimination diet has improved my quality of life so, so much and has introduced an element of control to my life that I haven't had for 8 years. I feel amazingly lucky to have stumbled upon this as the answer! - Tessa, NSW (story received in 2004)

[1138] Brief reports on "loud voice" (September 2012)

Thoughts on "loud voice" - took away breads with 282 preservative and huge difference in volume and improvement in speech for my son. Also we avoid 160b, colours and additives generally....he has no idea he is talking loudly. – Jennifer from facebook group

[1104] Had to work it out for myself because the doctors didn't know (February 2012)

I am one of those people that had to work out myself what was wrong with me because all the doctors I went to didn't know. I even had one doctor so exasperated he offered me an anti-depressant! I went through so much trying to find out what was wrong with me. And the doctors were no help at all. After a few years of reading newspaper articles and looking at what I ate I finally worked out my problem - that being preservatives 202 and 282. It was so good when a doctor listened to me, agreed and sent me to a dietician who agreed as well. I was then able to get my life in some semblance of order. - Maria, by email

[1096] 282: bread preservative 282 causes bedwetting (February 2012)

In around Oct last year, my 8 year old son, who is usually dry at night, started wetting his bed. He wet it every night for over 2 months. During this same time, his twin sister – who has never been dry at night, went from wetting her bed once a night to wetting at least twice a night. Even their 3 year old brother, who was occasionally dry, stopped having any dry nights.

The first think I started to think about was what had changed in our diet, since it was something affecting all 3 of them. I was Googling away when I happened to come across your Food Intolerance Network site and the link between Calcium Propionate and bedwetting. I found a "what's in your bread" website (since we were in the car on a journey up to Scotland, and not at home) and discovered that the "healthy", Warburtons Seeded Batch Loaf which we had switched to about 2 months before contains 282. I have not used it, or any of the bagels or wraps (all with 282) we used to buy again and my son has not wet his bed once since then – apart from last Monday night. The children went back to school this week and go to an after school club on Mondays where they get sandwiches for a snack. I called the manager to find out what kind of bread they use – and sure enough, it is a long-life bread with 282. I explained all the dangers of this particular preservative to her and she was most willing to switch to a safer brand in future! – Michelle, UK

[958] 282: Mumbles and nosebleeds (October 2010)

About 4 weeks ago I removed 282 from my sons diet and he improved greatly, he would only speak in a mumble, he suffered from many nose bleeds in the week, was very negative about everything, not affectionate, didn't interact at preschool, would not co-operate at speech therapy. The change has been great he is talking so much more, he has not had a nose bleed since stopping 282, he is loving to everyone, he was great at speech did everything he was asked and sat still, interacts with others and notices things around him so much more - Reader by email.

[921] 282: Acne from bread preservative (June 2010)

Just looking over your website, you are missing one major side effect of 282 in adults - acne. I am a 50 yo adult and I always get a breakout if I eat a bread product containing 282, either because it was in fast food and not tagged (McDonalds use it, KFC and Hungry Jacks don't) or because the label did not show it. – Ric, NSW

[858] 282: crumpets with 282 changed my sweet two year old into a monster (November 2009)

I have a 6 yo son who is intolerant to additives. 282 in particular changed my beautiful sweet then 2 year old into a monster. Luckily, because he was basically born with eczema, I had been very careful about introducing foods. I started giving him crumpets for breakfast when he was 2. He would be fine after eating them, however when he woke from his sleep he would be screaming and hitting me, very violent and uncontrollable. I initially thought it was hunger, as I found that when I gave him something to eat he would calm down. Anyway, to cut a long story short, I found out about 282 (in all crumpets and some breads) and cut it out completely. He was normal again!! – Michelle, NSW

[849] 282: 282 and growing pains (August 2009)

My youngest daughter seemed to be the only one that reacted to the 282 (calcium propionate) challenge. By the afternoon of the first day of the challenge she was once again complaining of aching legs. She had not complained the whole time while we have been on the diet, and she used to wake up crying, we had previously put it down to growing pains. – by email

[821] Snoring and sleep apnoea due to foods and new mattress (July 2009)

A nine year old boy from the NT suffered from snoring and sleep apnoea. The elimination diet revealed that a few food additives were responsible: sunset yellow (110), the bread preservative (282) and MSG (621). When he later developed the problem while avoiding his food triggers, fumes from a new mattress turned out to be the cause. – from Failsafe Newsletter #1. See <http://www.chem-tox.com/beds/frame-beds.htm> for hundreds of reports of health problems mostly in adults due to chemicals in new mattresses.

[831] 282: Runny nose due to bread preservative calcium propionate (July 2009)

My fourth baby had the same terrible broken night sleep pattern as the other three. After struggling for eight months, she did start to settle down, waking perhaps once a night. This was great until I started her, at 10 months on bread. She immediately returned to night waking - for no apparent reason- and also had a clear runny nose. I found that the bread had preservative 282 in it so we stopped feeding it to her. Within a couple of nights (I guess it had accumulated in her system) she again settled down to a peaceful nights' sleep! AND her nose cleared up! I can't believe that it could have been that simple!

[711] Heart symptoms from benzoates, bread preservative and sulphites (December 2008)

My 14-year-old son has Aspergers syndrome. He experiences arrhythmia and severe heart palpitations every time he consumes any additives 211, 282, 220 etc. If he has been free from these additives for over two weeks then he will get away with the first exposure and then it accumulates and gets worse. We saw a heart specialist and he found no problems, just blaming it on anxiety. He also gets more aggressive and violent once it accumulates... like Jekyll and Hyde. Sadly it is so hard to convince and be believed by doctors and his psychiatrist that these additives affect him. – Therese, by email

[448] 282: Identical twins react differently to bread preservative 282 (August 2006)

Since food intolerance runs in families, I would expect identical twins to be affected by the same food chemicals, so when this mother wrote about the reaction of a twin to the bread preservative, I

asked whether the other twin was affected. You can see her answer below. This is an excellent illustration of how parents are more likely to identify behavioural reactions to food chemicals and to miss other types of reactions. Yet usually if one member of the family is affected, others will be affected in different ways.

I am the mother of identical twin girls aged three and a half. I have discovered that one of my twin girls reacts violently to the preservative 282 in bread and since my girls were 18mths old have been purchasing bread through Baker Delight with great success. Recently for the first time in two years she was eating preservative bread on holiday and went off her head. Screaming, tantrums, the whole nine yards so to speak ... later ... When you asked does my other girl react differently, I really had to sit down and think about this one. Yes I suppose she does. It seems to me that her ability to hold her bladder disappears while being affected by 282, that is, she says she needs to go pee, then her pants are wet. Off 282 for a few weeks, mentions she needs to pee in the middle of grocery shopping, I have time to quickly finish off shop then get trolley through the checkout and then get to toilet. A big difference. At home now she will need to go, but can keep playing for about 2 – 5 minutes whereas if she is eating 282 and needs to pee, she will pee on floor on the way to bathroom. – by email.

[391] 282: Speech delay due to the bread preservative (calcium propionate 282) (March 2006)

My son had been assessed by a speech therapist at the preschool. She diagnosed, as best she could - we couldn't really keep Jack in the room much less anything like on-task - a severe expressive language delay and a moderate receptive language delay. Six weeks, later when off wheat products, he was reassessed by the same speech pathologist, using the part of the test that Jack had not done due to being non-cooperative. This time he seemed to have no significant receptive language delay and was only mildly delayed in his expressive language. She said she had never seen a child change so dramatically within such a short period of time. ... It took this family another year to discover that their child's problem was not the wheat in bread, but the preservative calcium propionate. For the full story, see [036] below.

[366] 282: "My babies woke up 8 times every night" (March 2005)

A friend gave me your book "Fed up" to read and I simply can't believe the difference it has made to our lives. I have four children. Three of them have been terrible sleepers right from birth. I have spent a week at Tresillian house with my 3rd child, where he was handed back to me at the end of the week unchanged. My babies all woke up on average 8 times every night and I have been so sleep deprived over the past 8 years that I became postnatal. I have a Degree in Early Childhood and have worked as a Director in a Pre-School for many years, and thought that I could control their behaviour by employing techniques acquired through professional training. It was frustrating to find that I couldn't cope. My first child was such a shock! I simply couldn't leave the house with him.

This book came in time for my 4th and final child. My daughter fell into the same terrible broken night sleep pattern as the others. After struggling for 8 months, she did start to settle down, waking perhaps once a night. This was great until I started her, at age 10 months, on bread. She immediately returned to night waking - for no apparent reason - and also had a clear runny nose. I found that the bread she was having had 282 in it. SO we stopped feeding it to her. Within a couple of nights she again settled down to a peaceful nights' sleep! AND her nose cleared up! I can't believe that it could have been that simple!

My question to you regards my children when they were babies, constantly struggling to sleep - could this additive (calcium propionate, 282) have been passed on to the baby through my breastmilk, causing a similar reaction??? [The answer is of course, YES, food chemicals are passed through breastmilk – Sue] – 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

[357] 282: A typical email about the effects of 282 (December 2004)

I have taken my 3yo son off all commercial bread products (it's become quite a crusade for me!) with marvelous results. He was going to be assessed for autistic disorders in a few weeks, but since taking him off 282 he has changed (he talks now! and his behaviour is so much better) and I know that his paediatrician will be amazed at his progress. At 18 months my son was only just babbling, and was considered to have the language skills of a 9 month old. After 6 months of speech therapy he was starting to mimic animal noises with prompting. By 27 months he had he had just two words - mummy and no. At 30 months I took him off commercial bread and at 34 months, he just started talking one day. At 36 months (last week) he now has the normal vocabulary of a 3 - 3.5 year old, and the understanding of language of a 4 year old. He is still having problems with actual speech, he only uses 2 word phrases most of the time and stutters occasionally, but the change in him in 4 months was amazing. He also has less tantrums, sleeps better and is generally easier to get along with. - by email

[355] 282: Six slices of bread a day (Nov 2004)

I removed the bread preservative 282 from my 7 year old son's diet after coming across your website and recognising many of the behavioural problems we were experiencing with him. He was extremely defiant, flatly refusing to do the simplest thing asked of him - homework was torture for all involved. He was loud, argumentative, talked non-stop, very anxious, had frequent bad dreams and was prone to angry outbursts. Much of this we had grown to live with since he was identified as a preschooler as being highly gifted but I was increasingly concerned about our family dynamics as we spent most of our time yelling at him and wondering how much longer we could survive, and how he was going to cope as he grew older - and therefore stronger and possibly dangerously violent.

He has always loved bread and, being a vegetarian, eats a lot of it, averaging six slices a day. The difference once we started making our own bread was astounding. He immediately became so much calmer and quieter that my husband asked if he was still in the house while he was getting ready for school in the mornings. He became much less defiant and argumentative, was able to stay still while I put his school tie on, much more polite and affectionate.

It was a lovely change to have him come home from school and give me a spontaneous hug, which is a very rare event as he is so sensitive to touch. He also seems to be able to think more clearly. I removed 282 a few days before the end of term 3 so was able to monitor changes over the holidays, which were the most pleasant we've ever had. In the first week of the new term he came home with a merit award for "staying cool, calm and collected" when faced with a situation which usually would

have had him in tears. That same week he gained a further stamp towards a different award, and the following week another one for his homework!

As a visual-spatial learner with a central auditory processing disorder and an IQ in the top 2% he was probably always going to have trouble fitting into a mainstream school, however the difference the removal of 282 has made is so marked we are all going to attempt the failsafe diet.- reader, NSW

[329] 282: Two years of underachieving with 282 (calcium propionate) (July 2004)

When our 8-year-old daughter was a toddler she was on a gluten free diet for some months after reacting to antibiotics. She had biopsies to rule out coeliac disease and at that time I bought a bread maker which I used almost exclusively until about 2 years ago.

During the time she was eating almost 100% home made bread, she had a great attention span. Due to other issues, our kindly recommended testing with the WPPSI – R, which we agreed to. I do not wish to go into the results here, only to say that this assessment now gives us a good indication that her later performance while on preserved bread was really poor.

We started using purchased bread over two years ago when I was having a very difficult pregnancy and needed to reduce my workload. Now I wish I had given up totally on the housework instead! The introduction of preservative 282 in purchased bread coincided with a decline in our daughter's abilities. Her bread intake increased until she was eating about 8 or more slices/day and her performance decreased until we were able to get very little work out of her as she was unable to concentrate for more than about one minute at a time.

In desperation I called her teacher who mentioned the television report on 282. I did further investigation on the net, and read your site. The result was that we returned to using our bread maker after not having used it for nearly two years. After about ten days, we had a different child. She started concentrating! She finished in 10 minutes what she previously couldn't finish in 4 hours. Her spelling started to improve as did her handwriting. She also finally learned to ride a two-wheeled bike!

As you can imagine, we were thrilled. After two years of under achieving and barely being grade level, our daughter is finally starting to accelerate and achieve some of that potential. I am grateful we had the assessment as it shows how much she was behind.

We have become very angry that this preservative is allowed. Even if it is just anecdotal evidence, I believe it validates the need for further research and a ban on 282. Our recent experience with [a particular supermarket] bread has shown how little we can trust labels. I also believe this could partly explain the increased rate of ADHD among lower income families. When Bilo bread is 1/3rd the price of Bakers Delight, what are most families going to use?

We are grateful for the work that you have done in researching this. I only wish we had known earlier. It makes us rather angry and frustrated at the lost potential and the damage it has done to our daughter. - reader, SA

[300] Dramatic improvement in speech delay (December 2003)

Our nearly two year old twin girls are awaiting a psychology assessment to determine whether they have autism. They both have a few symptoms especially lack of language - only use the words Mum, Dad, Nan, Bub, no and hello. Their understanding is slow although we feel this is improving. Although both show a few signs they also have signs that keep us hopeful that the girls do not have autism. They have fairly good eye contact and are very affectionate little girls. After researching for hours on the internet, I started the girls on a gluten free and dairy free diet last week. By the end of the day, one of the twins (who would normally use maybe one word a month) had not stopped using her basic words and was making new sounds. Within days they had both improved very noticeably. At first I thought it couldn't work that fast but whilst reading your books I have a different view and realise it might be lack of the bread preservative. - Reader, Tas

[293] 282: Screaming and constant diarrhoea in a baby due to bread preservative (September 2003)

Right from the minute she was born my daughter Laura was a nightmare. She screamed and screamed and screamed some more. I went around the twist. I had two children under two and it was hard to be up all night with this child and then carry her around all day. The minute I sat her down she would start screaming. I spoke to clinic sisters, doctors, friends and all gave me various degrees of advice. I kept saying that Laura is reacting to my breastmilk but was laughed at and told that that wasn't possible. I now know that I was right and the bread that I was consuming was giving this poor child a huge bellyache.

Life for the first 13 months was, and I won't lie, pure hell. People started treating me like I had PND but it was just this difficult behaviour in the baby. It had not eased with introducing solids and I by now had changed a million poeey nappies. Still everybody told me this was OK

At 13 months, I weaned Laura and she became a little better at sleeping but we still got a poo every nappy and her temperament was a little better. I continued with trying to cope and did the best I could all the while feeling that something was wrong. By 16 months I was getting worried about the nappies as they were causing her terrible pain in nappy rash. As we had moved towns I consulted a new group of clinic sisters and doctors. I had one clinic sister take notice and suggested that I get an appointment with a stomach and bowel doctor. I went to the local GP and was laughed at that this was so extreme and that it was fast transient time of food. This same doctor was consulted again at 18 months and he said that it was toddler diarrhoea. OK. When Laura's new sister was christened when Laura was 20 months we finally discovered what we think is wrong. We went to my husband's family farm and stayed for two and a half weeks. In that time all meals were cooked. No toast, no bread, no sandwiches, no diarrhoea, no nappy rash, sleeping through the night. I went from a child who had 10 runny burning nappies a day to 1 flushable nappy in a matter of days. Laura was cured.

I have since seen the GP who suggested I stay away from bread but gave me no help in finding out why bread was a problem. I went to the clinic sister and asked but to no avail. Then my sister heard about RPA's allergy unit and I was on the phone to them. Wow!!! Within minutes I had my answers. They explained the link between 282 and stomach upsets and runny nappies. They sent me the suggested shopping list and then made me an appointment. I felt like a huge weight had been lifted off my shoulders and now Laura is going great guns. My little girl is happy and sleeping through the night and has yet to react on her diet (day 25). I am lucky because I only did 10 days on no wheat no dairy and no soy and have already challenged milk and wheat flour. So far so good.

This is Laura's story and I am so lucky but it is infuriating that nobody listened to me. Doctors were quick to dismiss this problem but our food was affecting her and I was giving it to her thinking I was doing well by feeding her healthy bread. Thank goodness for people like you. My son's preschool teacher recently went to Canberra for your talk and made me aware of your books and website. Thank you thank you thank you. We are now having an afternoon tea information session on food at the preschool and will include all we know about food and the nasties that can be in it. Now we can educate other parents and try and help our community. - Rose, ACT

[223] 282: Taken off medication for ADHD (October 2002)

A few weeks ago, I saw Today Tonight's program regarding preservative 282. Since taking that preservative out of my children's diet, I have seen remarkable changes especially to one of my boys diagnosed with ADHD.

We have already taken him off dexamphetamine.

I have written to Today Tonight to hopefully get a follow up program as the greatest problem is McDonalds having 282 in their buns and muffins, which are provided by Buttercup. Let hope we can get somewhere as thousands of children in Australia are obviously affected and it's mind boggling to think of the millions of kids affected all over the world.

By all means use my e-mail and name on your website. If it helps one child, it would be worth it. - Peter, by email

[222] 282: Saved my son's future (October 2002)

I am now on the 2nd day of my 2 1/2 yr old not having commercial bread and I now have my angel back. Thank you, you have saved my sanity and my son's future - by email

[219] 282: No need for breadmaker (October 2002)

We are doing the failsafe diet with my son, aged six. The difference has been dramatic. His comprehension and reading skills have improved greatly since we started firstly additive and preservative free then started salicylate, amine and MSG free. We make our own bread. Finding that Brumby's are preservative free means that I don't need to take my breadmaker on holiday with us. Wow, a break all round!

Knowing what I am going through, and being able to read others' experiences has been life saving for me as a Mum. I very much appreciate what you have done with your web site. - reader Qld

[218] 282: no more "long-life" bread for us (October 2002)

Since we started using only Brumby's bread my girls are quite livable. We have fruit and vegetables, but steer clear of juices, soft drinks, crisps and sweets. Most of our food is home cooked from scratch so that I know what is used, and one girl is dairy-free. We haven't gone back to 'long-life' bread because Brumby's is so much tastier anyway.

[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

[207] 282: " very moody, stressed out and anxious " (September 2002)

I have always eaten a lot of bread, mainly wholemeal bread, muffins and bagels. I would often eat 6 English muffins a day. I used to get very moody, stressed out and anxious, in fact the people who I work with have asked me numerous times if everything is ok. I used to get very angry quickly and then in a split second I would feel like crying my eyes out. I also had an ongoing rash on my body, a feeling of ants crawling over my skin, was very tired and couldn't get up in the morning.

I really didn't want to be like this any more, so when I saw the previews on the telly about the bread preservative I watched with much interest, and decided to stop eating bread. Within a day I was feeling better, not irritable or anxious, and actually feeling happy, a change to how I normally feel. After three days I felt really different, better than I have for 6 or 7 years. Even my boss has said he's seen a huge change in me. I used to be a school teacher. If the kids in my class were feeling like I was, I can understand why they behaved the way they did. - Tim from Melbourne

[206] 282: A teenager talks about the bread preservative 282 (September 2002)

My eldest son (15) has always been very calm, but even he notices an anger building up following the ingestion of 282. Everyone puts the blame of "out of control children" on to working mothers and their subsequent tiredness but what's in our "healthy" meals? Here is our conversation last night, verbatim:

T: "Mum, can you put down "no 282" in our bread at school camp?"

M: "Do you find 282 affects you that badly?"

T: "HELL YEAH, I find a huge almost uncontrollable anger building up inside me, for no reason, and I feel I just want to punch something or someone. I don't, though, of course."

M: "Is 282 worse than MSG?"

T: "Yes, sort of. MSG gives me a really flat, dead feeling along with the anger, but the effects of MSG are easier to control."

This is from a young man who poo poohed my suggestions a year ago, when I put the whole family on the elimination diet because it was easier for us all to do it than just the younger boys. He is now the mediator when conflicts arise. I, too, am affected badly by 282.- by email

[204] 282: "282 one of main triggers for migraine" (September 2002)

I am very interested in your research re calcium propionate. I thought that it may be of interest to you that as a migraine sufferer, I have found that 282 is one of my main triggers for a migraine attack. I have them very infrequently but very severely. By keeping a food diary I have been virtually able to avoid them. Calcium propionate has been off my list for at least five years. Thanks for drawing the attention of the world to the effects of this preservative. - by email

[203b] 282: Serious concerns about the bread preservative 282 (September 2002)

I am delighted to read the results of this study, as I have had serious concerns about preservative 282 for several years. I have been interested in the Failsafe diet since I discovered it a year ago through a web search.

My interest is based on two reasons. Firstly, my son developed behaviour problems when he was 2 or 3 years old. Although he was a bright child who did well at school, he would sometimes have uncontrollable rages, often had headaches and felt sick and missed school. At thirteen he became obsessed with drugs, (we lived in a beach suburb which fostered this), refused school, and became sporadically psychotic. Although this was blamed on drugs, I had always known that certain foods might cause his problems. Testing for allergies did not reveal anything conclusive. After eight years of trauma, which caused a deep family rift, during which time there were regular attendances at courts for his uncontrollable behaviour, he became a heavy wine drinker and was accidentally drowned in the sea at the age of 21.

Secondly, I developed a very irritable bowel in my early forties. Trying a rotation diet showed that commercial sliced bread caused severe constipation. Other foods, obtained from the delicatessen, also caused overwhelming sleepiness, headaches and bouts of stomach aches and malaise. It is now so bad that eating any commercial bread or products such as commercial schnitzels, causes an attack which is characterised by bowel cramps, pain, burning sensations in the gut, nausea, headache and muscle spasms in my neck, back and legs. It usually takes three days of fasting, or a rice diet, before the symptoms subside. My medical advisers would never take seriously my claim that bread, cakes and pastries were associated with the problem, although I underwent food challenges under the direction of a respected dietician. Semolina and some home made bread does not cause me any problems. The received view still seems to be that there is a psychiatric component to irritable

bowel syndrome, especially as it seems a majority of women are diagnosed with this disorder! Consequently, there is little sympathy for the sufferer, and no treatment other than antispasmodics and anti-flatulence drugs.

I must say that my family and friends still see my disorder as unacceptable, so that I often have to eat things which I know will cause an attack I have been aware of the bicarb antidote for many years, but now find that only a dose of Durolox laxative taken the same day will head off the problem. I want you to know how grateful I feel to you for your persistence in pursuing this research and for publishing the findings so that further research may be undertaken to give your findings scientific credence. - by email, Sydney

[200] 282: Diarrhoea and stomach cramps (September 2002)

I just wanted to say thanks for doing your study on 282. I am the mother of a four year old girl who has seen many specialists and had heaps of tests in the last two years with no real answers. Since she was 12 months old she had persistent diarrhoea, stomach cramps, what we called "bottom burns" (very severe reddening and blistering of her bottom from front to back which meant she couldn't wear nappies or sit down) and mood swings (one minute she'd be on top of the world, the next she would be screaming and crying and have no idea why).

After seeing a "paediatrician" (I'm still not sure how he qualified) we put her on an elimination diet (it was our idea, he said to let her go and see if she grew out of it). We found her symptoms stopped when we removed all gluten containing products from her diet. A coeliac test came back negative so we reintroduced it to her diet and the symptoms started again. We eliminated wheat products and the symptoms stopped again. We did allergy tests and when they came back negative we were confused. I was sure that wheat was the problem, but apparently not. The gastro registrar that she sees was confused too. We decided to put her back on the full diet and then retest her for coeliac disease, but again it came back negative. She no longer has the diarrhoea and bottom burns, but the cramps and mood swings are still there.

Now we have a Plan B. I'm going to try eliminating 282 from her diet and see what happens. My daughter has been classified as gifted and does not have ADD, but her cramps and mood swings very much affect her and the people around her. Again, thanks for getting Today Tonight to show that story and I really hope it helps. I'm also going out today to get a copy of Fed Up. Just goes to show you: as a paediatric nurse I thought I had all the answers when it came to kids and I really had no idea at all. At least the paediatrician had less of a clue than I did!! He still tells me that because all the tests were normal there is nothing wrong with her. He said it's my parenting that's the problem, not my daughter's body, yet my two year old son is fine! - by email [Comment: it is possible to have an intolerance to wheat which will not show up on allergy tests - or it could be 282. Some of the children in the bread preservative study reported stomach aches, and see stomach cramps letter above and below]

[199] 282: Upset stomach (September 2002)

I was very interested in the Today Tonight segment. I have some real difficulties when I eat some breads yet I can eat other breads without them upsetting my stomach. - by email

[198] 282: Frequent flu, behaviour and rash on bottom (September 2002)

Thank you Mrs Dengate, I think you have answered my questions. I took my 4 year old daughter to a naturopath a year ago because I was sick of doctors giving her antibiotics for the flu which she got at least twice a year. One of the major suggestions was that I take her off wheat, so I did for the past year and she hasn't had a flu at all. We also noticed that her behaviour was much better and a rash that she has had for most of her life, mostly around the bottom area, had disappeared.

During this wheat-free year she did occasionally have some wheat and sometimes she would misbehave and sometimes she wouldn't and we couldn't work it out. I am positive the calcium propionate (282) is the cause. Over the past 2 months she has been eating wheat again, full on, but the bread that we eat is preservative free, and she has been a perfectly behaved child. I am not game to test her on a loaf of bread which has this preservative in it, but no doubt in the future she will have some at some time and we will be monitoring her behaviour. Thank you!!! - by email.[Comment: calcium propionate has very recently been linked with immunosuppression, which might explain the frequent flu.]

[197] 282: the bread preservative and heart rhythm (September 2002)

Q. Thanks for interesting article on the effects of bread preservative. I went to my heart specialist a couple of weeks ago and told him I that when I eat bread, it makes the rhythm of my heart go absolutely crazy. It misses one beat in four and makes me feel quite unwell. He told me that was absolute nonsense, but he would get me to wear a 24 hour heart monitor. So I did that and when they analysed the data, sure enough, 35 minutes after I ate four slices of bread, the graph went wild. But he still doesn't believe that it was caused by bread. So I'm going to look for another heart specialist who will listen to me. It was a real comfort to realise that there is a doctor (Dr David Brewster) who does believe beyond the textbook. Have you had any experience in 282 adversely affecting heart rhythm? I would be really interested to know whether you have had any other reports of 282 having other health side effects. - by email

A. See [Factsheet](#) - Of 27 Food Intolerance Network reader reports concerning food-induced heart symptoms, approximately 60% reported reactions to MSG and other flavour enhancers; 25% reported reactions to sulphites (of whom 3 also reacted to MSG); and 11% reported reactions to calcium propionate (bread preservative 282).

[196] 282: How safe is safe? (September 2002)

Q. Calcium propionate and related preservatives belong to the GRAS list of chemicals, "Generally Recognised as Safe". The public has been assured for decades that the safety of these chemicals is conclusively proven. If indeed propionates are found to be unsafe, what assurance do we have of the safety of other food-additive chemicals on the GRAS list? - email, Sydney.

A. Additives are never tested for their behavioural toxicity, that is, their effects on children's behaviour or learning. There are no assurances regarding behavioural safety of any additives. There are 50 "safe" additives that have been associated with behaviour problems, see list on the website. With propionates, a Freedom of Information process was required to eventually show that "that these documents do not exist" about their safety <http://fedup.com.au/information/fin-campaigns/freedom-of-information-from-fsan2>

[195] 282: Craving bread (September 2002)

Q. You mentioned the additive 282 in bread causes behavioural problems in children. What about adults? I only started eating 8-10 slices of bread a day in June. It started out with 4 slices of toast for breakfast. Two of the slices were for my 2 year old, but when she didn't eat hers, I ended up eating all 4 pieces. I started eating 1 sandwich for lunch but was craving more so I have been eating 2 sandwiches now. Sometimes at dinner we have toasted sandwiches. I'm hoping it is the bread that has been making me feel so hateful and easily annoyed. I never used to be set off so easily. Now it seems that I can't even talk to my husband without getting upset and he is probably one of the nicest, easiest-going husbands around. I'm going to go off bread with 282 in it and see what happens. I'll let you know in 3 weeks if I'm feeling more normal. Please let me know if you have heard this happening to adults ?

A. One of the mothers in the bread study reported similar effects and there have been others. A number of people have reported the same kind of cravings - gradually eating more and more preserved bread. The bread preservative is not the only food chemical which can cause these symptoms but if it does affect you, you should feel better within days of avoiding it.

[194] 282: Worst additive (September 2002)

I believe that 282 is the worst food additive. It is hidden in a healthy food (bread and crumpets) and most people don't know about the problems it causes in children. Doctors don't know about it, so therefore it doesn't cause a problem (yeah right!!). It turns good kids into screaming, tantrum throwing, horrible children with no idea why. That's why I hate 282 more than all other additives. I don't like the others much either!!

[193] 282: More trials? (September 2002)

Q. I decided to try removing the additive 282 from my families' diet to see if the behaviour of my children would improve. So far they appear to have only be behaving worse. Have you heard of this happening before?

A. There are at least three possibilities. First, it could be withdrawal symptoms. Food additives are addictive. When you eliminate them, you can expect withdrawals which usually only last two days sometime in the first two weeks. Second, it could be that some other food chemicals - including natural ones like salicylates in fruit juice - are affecting your children and you have unknowingly introduced more of those at the same time. Third, are you sure the bread you have switched to is preservative-free? There are numerous instances of mislabelling or misinformation. If buying unlabelled bread, insist on seeing the label on the premix. If they won't show you the premix label, don't buy it. Note that Bakers Delight bread boasts 282-free, but it does contain 223 (sodium metabisulphite) which affects some kids just as badly. If buying labelled bread in a supermarket, ask to see the premix label for an instore bakery (although this does not guarantee the baker has used the correct premix, and there have been problems with that too). If the bread comes from out of store, ask which bakery, phone that bakery and ask about 282. There are many instances of wrongly labelled out-of-store bread. Brumby's is very safe - they do not have 282 in any of their breads.

[192] 282: Hateful and easily annoyed (September 2002)

You mentioned the additive 282 in bread causes behavioral problems in children. What about adults? I only started eating 8-10 slices of bread a day in June. It started out with 4 slices of toast for breakfast. Two of the slices were for my 2 year old, but when she didn't eat hers, I ended up eating all 4 pieces. I started eating 1 sandwich for lunch but was craving more so I have been eating 2 sandwiches now. Sometimes at dinner we have toasted sandwiches. I'm hoping it is the bread that has been making me feel so hateful and easily annoyed. I never used to be set off so easily. Now it seems that I can't even talk to my husband without getting upset and he is probably one of the nicest, easiest-going husbands around. I'm going to go off bread with 282 in it and see what happens. I'll let you know in 3 weeks if I'm feeling more normal.

Two weeks later: After the first couple of days I started feeling less uptight. By the end of the first week I was feeling great. Then we went on a trip over this last weekend. I'm not sure if it was some toast I had both mornings where we stayed but the last few days I have been feeling all uptight again. We also stopped at McDonalds for breakfast on the way home yesterday and I'm not sure if there is 282 in the muffins. Now that I'm back home I will not be buying bread with 282 ever again. – email

[183] 282: "Many families in our district" (September 2002)

Congratulations on your fantastic work with the bread preservative research and media presentation. It certainly has a huge amount of people interested in our local towns. Many families in our district have tried avoiding 282 as a result and have had fantastic results, with much happier, easy-going kids. Our local school tuck shop is even considering switching to preservative free bread which I am sure will make a huge difference in the school as it is known to be a particularly bad school with very high teacher assault rate -both verbal and physical - and terrible bullying issues. I have also given their committee a copy of your tuck shop paper - they were very grateful for the info. - email, WA

[182] 282: "wonderful changes" (September 2002)

My son was experiencing behavioural and learning problems. Through diet (eliminating 282, other additives and some salicylates) I have seen some wonderful changes in him, especially in his sleeping. For the first time in his five years of life, he is sleeping 12-14 hours a day. - email, WA

[181] 282: "Now I have a completely different child" (September 2002)

I was extremely interested in the story of bread and ADHD on Today Tonight. I do not have an ADHD child however I used to have a child that could be quite erratic sometimes (like they all are at 5). He is dairy free and I have put him on preservative free bread over the last 2 weeks. Now I have a completely different child! No more tummy aches (used to occur every couple of nights) and very balanced behaviour. – email

[180] 282: "Already noticing a difference" (September 2002)

My jaw dropped to the ground after seeing your show on Today Tonight and thinking "that's my son!!" I thought I had tried everything to work out what was wrong with my son as a baby - he is 4 now. He wouldn't sleep. I was lucky to get 15 minutes sleep out of him day or night - doctors were saying it was colic, no remedies would help - nothing would work - he just constantly screamed and

screamed and screamed. I thought I was going mad. It wasn't until I weaned him off breast milk that he started to calm down a bit - but he is still difficult and hard to live with. My other two children are not like this at all.

I could never come to any conclusions and neither could anybody else. I noticed recently after I ate certain foods, I would feel tired and have to lie down and in two incidents recently I could not keep my eyes open and had to immediately lie down and sleep. I thought this was to do with fats (margarine etc).

But after seeing the show it is like the light has dawned. It has been one week now and we have been buying preservative free bread - and I am already noticing a slight difference in my son. I intend to eliminate other preservatives and get to the crux of it all. Thank you and I feel that I am at the beginning of the trek to a new and improved life.

[139] 282: Bread preservative-induced ADHD (December 2001)

I have felt compelled to write to you for some time now to let you know how successful Failsafe foods have been in our home. Our daughter, Courtney, now aged 7, was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 5. I was not convinced that the process of this diagnosis was exactly scientific so I decided to do some reading.

I read "Different Kids" and embarked on the elimination diet with the help of a dietician. We had tremendous results. Courtney's teachers were openly amazed at the change in her behaviour. With their support we started the challenges - no noticeable reaction to salicylates or amines, but a very strong reaction to the bread preservative (282) which gradually built up over a 5 day period. Once the challenge was stopped, it took 2 weeks for withdrawal. Courtney's behaviour was extremely aggressive and impulsive and withdrawal resulted in lethargy and stomach aches. We have not been able to do any further challenges as Courtney was jeopardising the very fragile friendships she had begun to make. We will need to wait for the Christmas holidays before proceeding any further.

I have only recently read "Fed Up" and I was amazed to learn just how many children react to 282. Our dietician was surprised at our results. I am now a bit of a campaigner against food additives and recommend your books to anyone willing to listen! Our heartfelt thanks to you for helping us rediscover the lovely little girl we knew as a baby without the need for medication. - Heather - by email

[138] 282: Low energy, headaches from bread preservative 282 (December 2001)

Avoiding the bread preservatives (280s) seems to be helping me with new energy levels and lack of headaches. ... reader, NSW

[121] Baby affected by food chemicals in breastmilk (August 2001)

I have a 10mth old baby boy who he screamed for the first 3 and half months of his life all day and half of the night until my doc got me onto a dietitian and we tried the elimination diet. Every time I do food tests he reacts by screaming in agony within 24 hours and often gets a nasty red rash on his face and not so severe rash on his back and stomach. Before we tried the diet, we were hospitalised twice because I just couldn't cope. He reacts to most additives but the bread preservative is the worst and he also reacts very badly to amines. - Dani, WA

[121b] 282: Reactions range from temper tantrums to very moody

My daughter is nearly 5 years old. When we did the elimination diet we found that she reacts to the bread preservative, some other preservatives and MSG. Her reactions to the bread preservative range from temper tantrums to very moody pre-diet behaviour. This includes hitting and annoying her brother and sister if they are trying to do homework or just generally whingy and very demanding behaviour and refusing to do as requested. At night, she wakes up from 1 to 5 times per night and walks the house. When we put her back on to preservative-free bread her behaviour changed back to good behaviour within 3 or 4 days. - Moya, Qld

[116] 282: Fast heart beat (tachycardia) (August 2001)

I have suffered for years from episodes of fast heart beat. It can be very strong and disturbing, and I have ended up in hospital but it goes away after a few hours and they could never find anything wrong. For a while I was getting it every afternoon. Eventually I worked out it happened on the days I ate bread. A friend suggested it might be the preservative in bread. When I eat Brumbys' bread I have no problems, but when I ate some preserved bread without thinking at my mother's place, I had another episode. – NT

[095] 282: Itchy hives (November 2000)

I'm letting you know how I got on with the bread preservative. I did get a reaction but not as bad as the amine test. Enough though to avoid eating it unless there is no other option. By the way, my reaction is always itchy hives. - reader, email

[058] 282: "An extreme difference in behaviour" (July 2000)

I am currently reading your amazing book, Fed Up. I must commend you on a job extremely well done. I honestly never realized that there could be such an emphasis on the food we eat contributing to a range variety of illnesses and behavioural problems. As a mother of two - a girl 6yo and a boy 3yo - I have noticed an extreme difference in the behaviour of my son just by changing the bread which we eat to not include preservative 282. I am sure by the end of your book and after implementing the Elimination Diet there will be many changes - all for the better.

Thanks again for making me more aware and for your great recipes - they are a treat for the whole family - reader, email

[036] 282: Jack's story: severe speech delay associated with bread preservative (April 2000)

I have been meaning to write to you for years to thank you for your books. We were on the right track with our then four year old son, Jack (now coming up to 10) when I read "Different Kids". I already suspected ADHD and knew very well that he reacted to food as do I. Jack had his first food reaction at 20 weeks gestation! I ate some of those awful red sugar-coated peanut things and he just went berserk, looping the loop and throwing himself all over the place for about an hour or so. So we were prepared.

I breastfed him for nearly three years - breastfeeding was only time I got to lie down and rest. He was a "windy" but fairly normal baby early on and I did avoid any foods in my diet that seemed to cause problems. He never liked to be left alone and would panic if put down while awake. From three months constant movement and novelty was required to keep him happy. When he was happy

he was radiant and when he was not he was grizzly and constantly squirming with this giving way to frantic screaming if the boredom lasted for more than a few minutes. Out shopping, strangers loved him as he responded with such joy to any attention and he was a very attractive baby. I had to carry him on my back in a sling, the stroller was too boring, too far away from me and not social enough. I accepted all this as I had been told I was a very, very difficult baby - colic - and my expectations were therefore "realistic".

At four months I began to introduce solids - rice cereal with breast milk to mix. The novelty seemed to appeal to Jack! Then I began to mix a small amount of orange juice in with the cereal to boost iron absorption. From there I introduced apple, ripe banana, pureed vegies (broccoli, pumpkin, etc.). He wasn't so keen on this but I heard about adding cheese to make the vegies more appealing, so I did this, often using parmesan cheese as well as milder cheeses. Jack loved bolognaise sauce mixed in too. Another favourite was avocado. He loved apricot and yogurt. He had a small amount of mashed prune to counteract a tendency to constipation. I was so pleased that he ate well and proud he had such a good appetite and such an ideal diet. When others asked how he slept (pretty awfully) I could at least say, "But he eats really well".

Meanwhile our little boy was getting more and more grumpy and demanding and more and more miserable when he wasn't amused. I looked frantically for the "ideal toy" the thing that would hold his attention. Each new item was met with delight and then discarded within thirty seconds and the grizzling began again.

Jack woke at least twice a night. He was into everything and seemed to always want more - more - more. He wasn't babbling - ba ba ba & da da da at 10 months. (In retrospect, the first sign of his problems with auditory processing that later resulted in speech delay and difficulty in learning to read.) He never sat and played. He never sat! He went straight from crawling to being dissatisfied because he couldn't yet walk.

From the 4 months we put his "difficult" and unhappy behaviour down to "teething". The first tooth didn't appear until eleven months.

When Jack was four months old I ate a small amount of dark chocolate in an ice-cream and about one hour later breastfed Jack. Within half an hour he was screaming inconsolably and instead of being tense as crying babies are he just lay back in my arms in an almost relaxed way as he screamed (low muscle tone no doubt). I identified the chocolate as the most likely culprit - I'm now sure I was right. After Jack went to sleep I sat up and expressed my other breast out into a nappy!

He was still a delightful, smiling, social child as long as he had the undivided attention of someone and a constant stream of novelty.

I've gone into this first year in detail because it really shows most clearly what was going on even if it was not obvious at the time.

My second child, a daughter called Ellen, was born when Jack was nearly 3 and a half. Jack was delighted and adored his little sister. The pregnancy was complicated by my blood pressure going high from 23 weeks. My mother came to look after us all as I was meant to be resting as well as taking anti-hypertensive medication. My mother just couldn't take Jack's behaviour.

I had been avoiding wheat in Jack's diet as I believed I had a problem with it. (My problem was actually with calcium propionate (282), of course, but cutting out all wheat did solve my problems of fatigue and fuzziness and so for years I thought I needed to avoid wheat). For convenience we changed to normal white bread from the supermarket. Jack loved it after the drier rye bread I had used formerly. I had not a clue about the preservative in the bread. Jack's behaviour went from bad to atrocious.

Jack's behaviour was at its all-time worst between the ages of 3 and 4. It was during this time he was eating the preserved bread. He put his hand through a windowpane during a tantrum. He woke with nightmares and screamed madly about and it was impossible to get through to him.

He went to bed late, reappearing often saying he was hungry and wanting (surprise, surprise) another slice of bread. He would wake at 4.30 in the morning wanting to be entertained. The only toy he persistently liked was his ride-on car. His behaviour and manner were almost autistic but for his insatiable sociability. His speech was very delayed and I don't think he really understood a lot of what was said to him. He was however very imaginative and inventive and liked to play pretend games, but always with someone. He had no liking for being read to but preferred to have me act out stories with both of us taking roles.

Needless to say I was exhausted and miserable. We lived half an hour out of town. My husband, Nick, was at that time managing farms. It was a very similar situation to yours, I think.

Jack was going to preschool in town a few days per week. Although they did not complain about Jack's behaviour (he has never been physically aggressive towards other people, even at his very worst and he's never said "I hate you" either - he is a very gentle character) When pressed they would say he was a bit weird, hiding in the playhouse and refusing to come out when the others were sitting on the mat listening to stories and taking off outside at inside time, etc, but he was only three so a lot of immaturity was allowed for.

My mother and my husband, Nick and I discussed Jack and his behaviour and decided that his things had got much worse around the time of the change in bread type. I took Jack off all wheat. The change was astonishing. He could have his socks put on without going berserk. You could talk to him and he would act on what was said. He didn't scream through everyday tasks such as bathing, dressing etc. When he went to preschool that week I dropped him off and didn't say anything about the changes. When I picked him up the teacher approached me and said "What have you done - he's a different child - he's playing with the others and listening to us."

Just before Jack went off wheat he had been assessed by a speech therapist at the preschool. She diagnosed, as best she could -we couldn't really keep Jack in the room much less anything like on-task - a severe expressive language delay and a moderate receptive language delay. Six weeks, later when off the wheat products, was reassessed by the same speech pathologist, using the part of the test that Jack had not done due to being non-cooperative. This time he seemed to have no significant receptive language delay and was only mildly delayed in his expressive language. She said she had never seen a child change so dramatically within such a short period of time.

Of course avoiding wheat meant avoiding a lot of foods, such as sausages. So Jack's diet also became generally blander and so did Jack. He was still difficult but at least he was "on the planet" now. He was only four but used to ask me "Why am I so happy, Mum?"

After a couple of months I screwed up my courage to do a challenge for wheat. I cooked some pikelets so I knew just what had gone into them. No reaction other than a very happy child - yummy pikelets!

I challenged with bread, planning to do two-week-on -- two-week-off challenges to see if any difference was apparent. That challenge lasted for two slices of bread fed to Jack at 4.30 on a Friday afternoon (timed so as to coincide with the weekend when Nick would be about)!! Within forty-five minutes, Jack was off his brain. Screaming, upset by everything - he finally went to bed and woke at 4.30 and was off again. This reaction lasted as a major thing for three days and Jack was unsettled for at least a week afterwards. Nick strapped Jack into his car seat and spent a lot of time driving around checking the property that weekend! We have never rechallenged this one as Jack himself has no desire to repeat that particular experience and neither have we!!

The clinic sister I went to for Ellen was very supportive of my efforts to unravel the cause of Jack's problems with diet. When I had identified bread as being a huge problem she pointed out that bread did contain a preservative. She did not know anything particular about this preservative and its effects and she only mentioned it because preservatives were believed to be a cause of behaviour problems in children. Unfortunately I didn't take this too seriously at that time - I still believed that they wouldn't put anything this harmful in our "daily bread" and therefore the preservative couldn't be that harmful.

I spent the next year or so thinking our problem was yeast. I also noticed that a lot of Italian food caused major problems and made Jack pale and blobby looking as well as affecting his behaviour.

It was around this time I found and read "Different Kids" and it all began to make sense. What I had been doing as a mixture of the observation that the blander the diet the blander the children, my little clinical-trials-with-one-(or two, three or four) participant(s) and intuition could now be done with structure. I think you saved us another three to four years of misery, money wasting and mucking about.

These days my husband says he feels better and doesn't get headaches any more. I've found I react to many things and I compete with Jack for the most sensitive-in-the-family status. Ellen reacts to salicylates by becoming easily enraged and blaming everyone for everything. She is, by the way, the most un-ADD person I've every met - highly organised, very logical, and a real old head on young shoulders -very knowing and mature and reasonable. She is also extremely bright and academically gifted especially with maths.

Jack becomes hyper and idiotic and unable to learn when he has more than moderate salicylates in his diet. His salicylate reaction is a rapid-onset-rapid- resolution-type reaction. Amines used to make him irritable and as close to aggressive as he got but these days the reaction takes the form of a migraine. Jack still has academic problems related to his ADD and particularly to his auditory processing disorder. He is on Ritalin for school. I liken it to wearing glasses and tell him his sister wears glasses at school to help her eyes focus and he needs Ritalin to help his mind focus. He takes a very small dose (1 tab then 1/2 tab three hours later) and he finds it very effective. He does not take it at weekends usually although he would have a dose if we were going to do something that required good behaviour despite being bored or to help with a task requiring concentration and organisation such as making a model etc. He also asks for a dose if he his anxious to be on his best behaviour.

We also need to apply behaviour modification techniques on a daily basis - I did a Triple P course and this has been immensely helpful in managing Jack.

To put it simply, our approach to Jack's behaviour and other problems three-tiered one: First comes diet and general good health including adequate sleep and food - this is essential as if his diet, in particular, is off then nothing else is really effective.

Second comes the behaviour modification. I believe a lot of poor behaviour in children is caused by not being able to understand their environment. It seems to me that all effective behaviour modification systems provide not only rewards and punishments but more importantly they organise and simplify the social environment for all players. This consistency enables children who have trouble reading those around them to understand what is happening and they are therefore able to comply.

And thirdly, medication is the icing on the cake. It does cause Jack persistent appetite suppression and sleep problems. (The appetite suppression can be a good thing for parties though as he will only pick at plain chips and have a bit of lemonade if on medication!) Once again thank you so much for your books - and for the great website, and please sign us up for your newsletters, discussion group and kids discussion group! - Alison, Queensland

[031] 282: Results of bread preservative (282) challenge (January 2000)

You said you were interested to hear how our challenges went. Well, what can I say - they weren't fun times.

We challenged nitrates and amines and yes, my daughter does become irritable a day or two after eating foods containing these chemicals. Her mood only lasts around 24 - 48 hours and so this isn't too bad. I can tolerate this but as for the 282 bread challenge, I never want to see another slice of bread or crumpet or anything else that contains this preservative.

I felt cruel doing this challenge but as you say, we do need to know if she reacts to this preservative. I could see her mood slowly changing by the fifth day on the challenge and from then on it only got worse.

My food diary reads:

day 5 - cries easily

day 6 - cries easily, slightly cranky

day 7 - cries easily, sour faced (stopped challenge)

day 8 - angry, irritable, fighting with us and sibling

day 9 - foul mood

day 10 - terrible mood, irritable, cranky, easily angered

day 11 - mood still bad but improving

day 12 - bad mood, irritable, angry, stirring siblings

day 13 - irritability improving; still fires up but not as frequently

day 14 - mood much more pleasant

day 15 - pleasant child

The one good thing to come from this challenge was that it opened my husband's eyes up and he has now started reading labels and watches carefully what our children eat. - mother of two

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