

Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

www.fedup.com.au

(“asthma”, “chronic cough”, “persistent cough”, “ventolin”, “puffer” keywords only)

[1301] One-liners (February 2015)

Hard work at the beginning, but so worth it at the end. I kicked my asthma - off all medications; my eldest was diagnosed with ADHD - fixed by changing his diet; my middle was diagnosed with mild hypotonia (muscle tone) - fixed by changing his diet; my youngest had tantrums - fixed!!! We are still doing it 11 years down the track with some foods brought back in. Schooling excelled for all of them – Tracy

I've had chronic asthma for 40 years and 3 months failsafe I'm so so much better - Ruth

[1298] Rants about seeing health professionals - facebook thread (February 2015)

My doctor also told me there's no scientific evidence that food has any effect on children's behaviour. I don't need scientific evidence. If my kids eat chemicals... they go nuts!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! End of story. AND I'm asthmatic... and have been drug free since we eliminated the nasties from "my kids" diets. First time no drugs in 30 years!- Cristi

[1148] Preservative/artificial colour use in hospital (October 2012)

My son was recently admitted to hospital due to an asthma attack. While in hospital he was regularly given icypoles to eat. When I read the label, I discovered these contained two preservatives and two artificial colours (even though the asthma pamphlet they hand out in the hospital says to avoid preservatives and artificial colours?!) After I stopped the icypoles his asthma improved and he was able to go home. I have put in an official complaint about this. - by phone on radio

Update by email: I need some advice about how to tackle the completely inadequate response to my official complaint to the Women's and Children's Hospital here in Adelaide. I complained about their use of ice blocks loaded with artificial colours and preservatives (I spoke to you on Belinda Heggen's radio show on 5AA briefly about this). I received a letter from the head of the food services department saying they were reviewing their use of these ice blocks but I smelled a rat and rang the complaints line back again. They then rang the head of the department for me and confirmed that they had no intention of removing those ice blocks from use in the hospital (even though the asthma pamphlet they hand out in the hospital says to avoid preservatives and artificial colours?!) but they are apparently reviewing how many they give to children (my son was given 4 ice blocks in under 24 hours).

I find this response completely and utterly inadequate and I'm not prepared to accept their answer to my concerns. So I'm wondering if you have any idea how I can fight this and get them to start using ice blocks that aren't full of colours and preservatives? - Katherine, Adelaide (suggestions from readers are welcome, email suedengate@ozemail.com.au)

[1295] Amines: "I'd love Failsafe to become common practice in my country (December 2014)

My 7 yo son has gone from a "Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" personality, which included plain meanness, virulent on-and-off, ODD, and actual violence, followed by heartrending bouts of crying and heavy "drugged" sleep, to showing the world and his school the all-around nice, bright kid I knew he was, and his honors roll presence is exactly correlated with his "sticking by the Failsafe rules" periods. Our asthma inhalator sits unused for weeks already. Son's jaw- grinding, bedwetting, sleeves munching, and shouting all kinds of weird "war cries" at the most unbecoming moments, his bouts of self-hitting, his nightmares, are a thing of the past (did I say "thank you" already?). For him too, the amines challenge was... let's say premature - family from France

[1289] 635: "blinding headache and felt like there were bubbles in his throat" (November 2014)

Well, after 3 months failsafe, my 8 year old son had a terrible reaction to what I suspect was 635. We gave in to Chargrill Charlie's, and within 12 hours, my son was coughing incessantly. He seemed ok to go to school (I didn't recognise what was happening), but I got a call from the school that he was having difficulty breathing. They gave him Ventolin (as per Asthma Attack protocol), and I brought him to the hospital as he was white, sweaty, shaky and very frightened. He later told me he had a blinding headache and felt like there were bubbles in his throat.

His headache dissipated over about 3 days which I treated with Panadol and Nurofen. He was quiet for several days, which is very unlike this energetic boy! - Kathy

(Note that Nurofen is not failsafe; people who react to salicylates usually react to it)

[1265] One-liners (March 2014)

I have been on a low salicylate diet for 9 years and it has dramatically improved my life. I am no longer plagued by asthma if I keep to a low salicylate diet- what a relief to be able to breathe. Other benefits are- never catching colds and flus; no constant phlegm, blocked nose and hayfever; no headaches at all instead of daily ones; and no PMT. I am now full of energy and am able to live my life fully - Rosemaree

[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

[1211] To do the diet or not, a facebook thread (July 2013)

I don't do failsafe but cut out additives ie preservatives, colours and flavours, as a way of managing my daughter asthma. When I did it I noticed a great change in my son's behaviour, he's in kindergarten this year and doing really well, with the occasional down days (usually my fault for slipping with food). So good luck, I noticed results far quicker for my daughter's asthma, but it did work for sons behaviour, tied in with me trying to be more calm and consistent with managing behaviour. He doesn't have ADD or anything, was just really loud and impulsive, I couldn't manage his behaviour all the time which was frustrating and he's even noticed he feels better. Good luck, well worth a try - Kate

[1177] Asthma under control due to low salicylate diet (February 2013)

My son is 3 years old and we have his asthma under control due to the low salicylate diet he has been on since 18 months.

He still has a problem if he eats too many salicylates, an example is a few nights ago I let him have a very small amount of a pasta dish which had tomatoes and dried herbs, that was at around 6.30pm at around 4.00am the next morning he came into my bed and his breathing was terrible - fast and through his mouth, I had to give him his ventolin and it took him over an hour to go back to sleep in my bed he would not go back to his own. I had to take him to the GP on that same day at around 3.00pm to have his tonsils checked as the speech therapist thought they were large (the GP said they are a little bit but not enough to be causing him any problems), the GP also listened to his chest and said it was very good. I should have known better and will not do it again in a hurry. I am convinced the diet works and it has really helped William.

His dietician put him on gluten free as after about 3 months or so of the as he was not putting on weight as he should be. I thought you might like to hear that the A2 milk is helping William's speech, it has improved a lot. Also his appetite is much better and he is no longer constipated as has been since we started failsafe eating. – Louise, by email

[1176] Salicylates, benzoates, additives linked to asthma, ADD, headaches (February 2013)

Our paediatrician advised us to try failsafe eating for our 8 year old boy after years of struggles with asthma and ADD. What a change. For the first winter in 8 years he has gone medication free - his usual line up was prednisolone, antibiotics, 2 x preventative puffers and constant ventolin.

We tried the benzoate challenge. Within 24 hours of trying one glass of lemonade he was coughing again (causing mucous/vomiting as well) and needing ventolin for the next 48 hours. The same happened after a neighbour 'kindly' gave him a blueberry frostee! 48 hours later we are still recovering, but this time from headaches as well! – Meg, NSW

FIN Comment

Most children's medications contain benzoate preservatives (also called hydroxybenzoates or parabens) - even asthma medications - and these too can contribute to asthma, eczema and hives as well as behavioural effects.

Asthma and intolerance to benzoates <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/8952792>

Clinico-immunological study of 16 cases of benzoate intolerance in children <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9162174>

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[1110] How learning about food intolerance changed my life (April 2012) COURAGE AWARD

I thought I knew about food and nutrition, as I learnt about this at Unihowever, little did I know, how little I knew....about 6 years ago now I heard that Sue Dengate was on TV talking about food additives and how they affected kids behaviour, so I went to her website www.fedup.com.au where I bought her DVD and books, at that stage purely as part of my ongoing education, as I treat a lot of kids in my practice.

After watching Sue's DVD with my husband, we decided to try the FAILSAFE program, which is based on the program created by the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, as we wanted to see if it would help my husband's asthma.

After just a few days of my whole family being on the program we were amazed to find that not only my husband's asthma had dramatically improved, but my son was much calmer, and happier. In addition, we were all sleeping better, and from that time pretty much all arguments have stopped in our home.

Personally, I noticed that I became more calm and relaxed, not that I thought I was uptight or stressed before, but after 5 days on the program I felt incredibly happy, and couldn't stop smiling, I felt as if I was on a yearlong holiday!

I hadn't realised that food intolerances were affecting the way I was coping in life, but now life is so much easier, and I accomplish so much more, because I am even more 'clear thinking' than I was before.

I really notice it in my son.....if he eats foods that are not the best for him, he becomes cranky, and emotional, plus he suffers from nightmares and unnecessary worrying during the day. But when we are careful with his food, which is most of the time, we have a happy, relaxed boy who sleeps well and wakes up with a smile.

Over the last 6 years I have recommended many of my patients to try the Failsafe program, and most of them are amazed at how it changes their lives. A side benefit, for people suffering with back pain, is that many back pain sufferers, as well as migraine sufferers, actually have less frequent bouts of pain when following the program. I personally experienced this as well....after having Chiro for many years to help my bad back, I was relieved to find that by simply eliminating problematic foods for me, I became pain free like I had never done before. Today I still have Chiropractic for preventative health reasons, but knowing about the food side of things and how it affects my health has truly made such a change to my life.

On a very personal note.....my husband and I were constantly arguing before we changed what we ate, we had years of trouble and were seriously considering divorce. After 5 days on the program we suddenly had peace between us. Very quickly our relationship was rebuilt without the negative effects of food intolerances affecting our moods and attitudes to each other. I will be forever grateful to Sue and Howard Dengate for making this information public, apart from our massive health benefits, both my husband and myself firmly believe that the Failsafe program actually saved our marriage. When we look at what we have today, a strong happy family living peacefully together, we have to pinch ourselves, as it is so far from the reality of our lives before we learned about our food intolerances. We are incredibly grateful for Sue and Howard's work, we believe it has saved our boys from having to live in a split family, and has saved us from the stresses and sadness that would surely have come from our divorce. - Kellie Dawson, Chiropractor, Springwood, QLD

[1080] Additive-induced asthma – from 20 puffs of Ventolin a day to none (December 2011)

I wrote you 4 years back (story [524]), and I just thought I should write in with an update. If you'll recall I had suffered from additive-induced asthma from the age of 10 (I'm now 37). It took a couple of decades to finally realise that artificial food additives were THE cause of my condition.

As a heads-up for those still "lost" and wondering if there is a cure, I strongly urge you to give up what I call the "trifecta" (i.e. artificial colours, flavours and preservatives). This covers most of the main culprits which cause most peoples' asthmatic conditions (in my opinion).

After this, I also discovered I was highly sensitive to "vegetable gums" (that friendly sounding additive in many bread products: This includes Gum Arabic and the so-called 'safe' one, Xanthan Gum). The symptoms these two nasty additives create in sensitive people is a tight chest, light-headedness and a general feeling of not being able to breathe. (I literally almost died one night a while back, when I woke up gasping for air at 3am, after having consumed bread with Xanthan Gum in it over a period of four days straight...)

Well, there it is guys. Thanks mainly to your wonderful website I have gone from 20 puffs a day to not touching Ventolin or any medication for over a year now. Not a single time! I honestly never thought I would reach this stage. It's so sad to think that if we - as a society - just stuck to "whole" foods, leaving out ALL artificial additives, many, MANY health issues would be non-existent. Things are getting better, thanks to websites like yours, Sue, but it's still too slow. Thank you so much for all the valuable things you do and God Bless you all! - Mark, by email

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

'My asthma has gone since we started the diet' said one mother. 'It started when I finished my nursing degree, moved out of home and started buying processed foods. That was 13 years ago, and I've spent the last five years on preventers. I was able to give up preventers one week into failsafe.'

[1071] This was the answer: SALICYLATES (September 2011)

My daughter cried a lot as a baby and suffered with severe asthma from a few months old. When I sought a doctor's advice there was not much support with the excessive crying but she was prescribed medication to treat the asthma. The medication did relieve the breathing but it hyped her up and caused agitation. At about the age of two I took her to a different doctor, she was really sick and he even considered that she may have Cystic Fibrosis due to the severity of the condition.

I breastfed and I now believe that breastfeeding may not have been the best option because our diet often consisted of tomato based pasta dishes, and also fruit and vegetables that I now know have a high salicylate content, which of course would have filtered to the baby.

As the years passed we were dealing with agitation, temper outbursts and ADHD-type behaviours although I never considered that she suffered from this condition and as a mother I always felt compassion and concern, and was desperate to find out what was causing this behaviour and severe agitation in this beautiful little girl. On the rare occasions that I would address the problem with a doctor in many ways I was relieved that a diagnosis was not offered because I did not want her on medications that are usually prescribed.

When she was 10 years of age I decided I needed to address this once again. Here is what turned out to be the answer:

I had made a doctor's appointment to have one last go at getting to the bottom of this. I once again hoped the doctor did not suggest medication because even though I wanted help I really did not feel comfortable going down this road.

I was finishing my preparation to leave for the appointment. I had the radio and SUE DENGATE came on at that moment to speak about food allergies and intolerances. I could not believe it, I hadn't heard of Sue before but I thought "I have to listen to this", so I quickly turned the volume. Sue mentioned various additives and preservatives which affect many people but I still did not totally think that was what it was for my daughter. Then Sue mentioned SALICYLATES, immediately I found a pen and wrote it down (I had never heard of it before). I listened to the remainder of the radio presentation and then walked out the door.

The doctor still really did not have much to offer. So I asked him "have you ever heard of Salicylates?" He said he had, so I further asked he had any lists of the foods that contain salicylates which fortunately he did and gave it to me.

Reading about salicylates and learning where they are helped me to eliminate the foods from her diet and this was the answer. Life soon improved for everyone especially our daughter, including no more asthma. This is my story and I wish to express my gratitude and thanks to Sue for her wonderful work. – Lisa, SA

[1051] 320: Unnecessary diet restriction due to BHA (from submission to FSANZ 2006)

When my daughter was about four, she required Ventolin whenever she ate bread and so she ended up wheat free. The only time she has had asthma since last year was during the antioxidant (BHA, 320) challenge. You were right about the wheat - it is no trouble whatsoever. We realise now that our daughter was wheat free unnecessarily for years. – reader from NZ

[1043] 320: Asthma from unlisted antioxidants in ricemilk (from submission to FSANZ 2006)

My 11 year old asthmatic daughter is extremely sensitive to additives. After she reacted to some ricemilk recently, I emailed Vitasoy and expressed my disappointment with their company for not listing the BHA. Today I received a phone call from the manager to apologise for the unlisted BHA. What a turn around, the company were genuinely distressed that their health food had caused an asthmatic reaction and were willing to modify the product in due course. (Thanks to this mother and the one above for contacting the manufacturer, the Vitasoy range is now free of nasty antioxidants) – S..., NSW

[1040] 320: Asthma and antioxidants (from submission to FSANZ 2006)

I am writing to thank you for all the help your book 'Fed up with Asthma' has given my family. My daughter is two and a half years old, and was diagnosed with asthma when she was 10 months old. She was hospitalized with croup and later we were told she has asthma. She was put on a steroid puffer and I was told she would need this for most of her childhood.

I knew that food additives were not safe and I tried not to buy anything with 'numbers' on the back of the packs, which proved to be difficult. Still this didn't seem to help, I also put her on goats milk and took her off all other dairy products.

I took her to an asthma pediatrician, three months ago. He gave her an allergy prick test which came back totally negative. She was allergic to nothing! The doctor assumed that food was not a cause of her asthma. I was told that the cold winter nights were triggering her asthma, to go home and put her back on her steroid puffer. This winter she seemed to get worse. As the cold nights set in, her coughing increased to the point that I was up every 20 minutes comforting her. I was desperately trying to keep her off the steroid puffer and I was about to give in, when I saw your book.

My daughter has now been on the elimination diet for three weeks with amazing results. By the end of the first day she coughed only once, same the second day and the next two days nothing. At the end of the second week I made a mistake. I bought a packet of plain rice crackers, the ingredients: rice, canola oil and salt. I thought they would be okay (I realised later they probably contain antioxidants in the oil), so my daughter had quite a lot as a snack. That night she was back to coughing every two minutes and using her ventolin puffer. After 24 hours she was okay again and back on the failsafe diet. I realise that we still need to discover her sensitivities but for now she can breath easy with no barking cough and we can both have a good nights sleep. If it hadn't been for your dedication to this cause I don't where we would be today. Thank you. - reader from WA

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'Could pesticides sprayed on a farm cause asthma in a salicylate-sensitive asthmatic?' asked another mother. **Yes** - pesticides can be yet another of the inhaled salicylates or other inhalants that can affect food sensitive children and adults.

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I knew that food additives were not safe and I tried not to buy anything with 'numbers' on the back of the packs, which proved to be difficult. Still this didn't seem to help, I also put her on goats milk and took her off all other dairy products.

I took her to an asthma pediatrician, three months ago. He gave her an allergy prick test which came back totally negative. She was allergic to nothing! The doctor assumed that food was not a cause of her asthma. I was told that the cold winter nights were triggering her asthma, to go home and put her back on her steroid puffer. This winter she seemed to get worse. As the cold nights set in, her coughing increased to the point that I was up every 20 minutes comforting her. I was desperately trying to keep her off the steroid puffer and I was about to give in, when I saw your book.

My daughter has now been on the elimination diet for three weeks with amazing results. By the end of the first day she coughed only once, same the second day and the next two days nothing. At the end of the second week I made a mistake. I bought a packet of plain rice crackers, the ingredients: rice, canola oil and salt. I thought they would be okay (I realised later they probably contain antioxidants in the oil), so my daughter had quite a lot as a snack. That night she was back to coughing every two minutes and using her ventolin puffer. After 24 hours she was okay again and back on the failsafe diet. I realise that we still need to discover her sensitivities but for now she can breath easy with no barking cough and we can both have a good nights sleep. If it hadn't been for your dedication to this cause I don't where we would be today. Thank you. - reader from WA

[1030] Jade's story: no ventolin needed after 27 years of asthma (May 2011)

I have suffered from severe asthma since I was 18 months (current age = 29). I have been completing the elimination diet with the supervision of my GP because there are no supportive dietitians here.

So far I have passed the following challenges: salicylates, amines, propionates, sorbates, benzoates, colours, nitrates and sulphites. I have failed: dairy, lactose free dairy, and MSG/natural glutamates. When I was little I use to react to milk with asthma after half a glass but always thought it was only milk that set me off, not all of the other dairy products too. I reacted to the milk challenge by day 2. With the lactose free milk, I actually woke up in the middle of the night with quite bad asthma. I have also found that my skin has improved, my post nasal drip has pretty much gone and my sinus pains have been almost nonexistent since beginning elimination.

I completed the MSG/natural glutamate challenge and failed on the 3rd day. Asthma became quite bad and I needed ventolin for next 3 days after. I had to use Buteyko breathing a lot to feel ok. Also found that I fell into a blubbering heap for 2 days after the challenge, not much fun!

I am doing it by myself and have found it extremely challenging socially but I am coping. I was so unwell last year that I just had to do something else. This was suggested by my homeopath. Thank you so much for spending the time on Fed Up.

My asthma has improved significantly, from 1600 mg pulmicort and an average of 8 puffs of ventolin a day (in the week before beginning elimination) to 800mg pulmicort a day and I haven't had any ventolin since failing the MSG/natural glutamate challenge so the last puff would have been a month ago. My doctor is hesitant to reduce this dosage of pulmicort as my asthma is also impacted through environmental factors such as weather changes. I have even been attending fitness classes again, which is so exciting and haven't needed ventolin so far. I have been able to just use my Buteyko breathing if feeling a bit of tightness. Feels like I'm getting control back on my life! - :) Jade, South Australia

[998] Asthma: How to save a life: the asthma catechism (March 2011)

23 years ago, at the age of 30, I was hospitalised for asthma at Frankston Hospital in Victoria; I recovered quickly with intravenous Theophylline and inhaled Ventolin via a pump. The specialist would not discharge me until I learned what he ironically called The Catechism:

Q: What do you do in the event of an asthma attack in a remote area if there is no puffer?

A: Give them coffee until they shake (lots): this will save them. Decaf coffee will not work.

As it happens, Theophylline is similar to caffeine; the side effects and benefits are similar. – Jonathon, Vic (A Cochrane Database Review, Caffeine for Asthma 2010, agrees: 'Caffeine appears to improve airways function modestly, for up to four hours, in people with asthma' <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20091514>).

[997] Asthma: hospital admissions - from one per week to one per year (March 2011)

First, I have to thank you for the work you have done. It is just over 3 years since I first picked up a copy of Fed Up with Asthma after my then 16 month old son was diagnosed. The medication did not seem to be working as it should, and I knew there was something else going on. He has major difficulties with sulphites, MSG and flavour enhancers (and natural glutamates) and benzoates (although we still avoid all preservatives and artificial colours because we are used to it now!), and after seeing an allergist and finding a nut allergy as well, all the pieces fit together. He is now a happy and healthy little boy about to start pre-school, whose nut allergies have been decreasing over the last two years - in fact his peanut allergy is totally gone - and has gone from one hospital admission a week to one every 8-12 months. We truly thank you, because it was your book that put us on the right track. Clare, NSW

[995] Salicylates: Nasal polyps & salicylates (March 2011)

I recently went to see an ENT specialist as I have nasal polyps that have bothered me since my 20s and I was due to have surgery to have them removed. The doctor told me that as our town was having problems with the privately owned base hospital I would have to go to the private hospital at a cost of \$2400. He did also say when I said I used to have asthma that people who have asthma and nasal polyps are usually salicylate sensitive.

As we didn't fancy paying the exorbitant fee, I got your book Fed Up out of the library, remembering you had said about salicylates. To cut a long story short we cut salicylates out of my diet and one week later I was able to breathe through my nose. THANK YOU Sue. We have since purchased Fed Up and plan to loan it out to anyone we can help. - Geoff, NSW

[994] Salicylates: Aspirin-induced asthma and nasal polyps (March 2011)

I have Samter's Syndrome (consisting of asthma, aspirin sensitivity and nasal polyps) also known as Samter's Triad or aspirin-induced asthma. For the last 29 years I have been taking medications and trying to stay alive. When I found the Australian salicylate lists I was so excited, I could finally understand what was happening. I was inadvertently eating salicylates every day. – by email, USA (There are numerous less-than-accurate salicylate lists on the internet. The only figures we support are the updated lists from RPAH; ask for our salicylate mistakes information sheet: suedengate@ozemail.com.au)

[964] One-liners (October 2010)

I am reading your book 'Fed Up with Asthma' and finding it very enlightening. You have included so many alternatives to problematic chemicals and additives to make life liveable. – by email (Fed up with Asthma is out of print but available in libraries. Otherwise, see chapter 7 in the 2008 edition of Fed Up).

[925] 220: Asthmatic son affected by illegal sulphites in mince (June 2010) [COURAGE AWARD]

I tested the mince at my local butcher yesterday. I bought the meat at 16.35pm, got home, tested it and the reading was between 180-400mg! It changed colour so quickly to the deepest shade on the side of the test strip container I didn't need to wait 30 seconds to see it change. On a positive note, I went in to Aldi and tested their meat today and it had no discernible change, so I guess I'll buy my meat there. My son takes daily asthma medication and has been sick since I deviated from my expensive organic butcher to the garbage they sell at the local butcher. My son has been on numerous cortisone courses this year as well as daily antihistamines and antibiotics - I couldn't figure out what was causing it until I came across the sulphur dioxide article on your website. I have reported these people to Primesafe (Victorian Government food regulatory body) and I am thinking of pursuing legal action due to the impact it has had on my son, I can't believe I stood at that butcher earlier this year and they lied to me and told me they did not use preservatives in their mince - they were so helpful telling me what did and didn't contain it and how I could get preso free sausages etc. I should have known it was too good to be true. - Tonya, VIC.

[880] 160b: Autistic symptoms due to yellow and annatto colorings in the US (November 2009)

We were told by pediatricians and individuals in the child development field that my son was autistic when he was 2 1/2 years old. He was extremely sensitive to certain fabrics and clothing against his skin. He could not speak so that we could understand him (he had his own language) and would display fits of anger when we could not understand him. He would close himself into his own little world at times and not want to socialize with our family or other children. He could not jump, he could not run or do simple movements that most children his age had already mastered.

We enrolled him in a special program for children who were developmentally delayed - he was in speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy 4 days a week.

He progressed well in the program but continued to have additional setbacks. He developed asthma and eczema and the fits continued. He started kindergarten with an IEP (Individual Education Plan) that continued to include the different therapy sessions and also added intervention for him with regard to the regular classroom activities.

I would find cheese wrappers behind our recliner, his favorite food was ANYTHING with cheese. We continued to work with different therapists and the school system up until he was in second grade.

By the grace of God, I was in my chiropractor's office waiting to be seen and I picked up a book in his waiting room that was about ADD, ADHD, ODD and Autism in children. I randomly opened it to a chapter that described my son in every sentence. Until I read that chapter I had never even paid attention to Annatto or Yellow food colorings. It was worth a shot.

It took me almost 6 weeks to clear my son from any artificial yellow food coloring. It was like living with a child drug addict. He craved anything yellow and would cry uncontrollably, throw temper tantrums, and sleep and sleep. A short while after we cleared his diet (I even packed his school lunches) his teacher asked me in for a conference. His reading score had gone from a kindergarten level to a second grade level in almost 9 weeks!!!!

My son is now 12 years old and will be going into the seventh grade. He no longer has an IEP or any therapeutic intervention. He is an Honor Roll student, plays football and is active in the Boy Scouts. He no longer needs any medication for asthma and his eczema is gone. He knows that he has an addiction/allergy to annatto and yellow food coloring so he also is very aware to read every label and "just say no" when offered something that he can not have.

The yellow food colorings cause him to be hyperactive and then he crashes. The Annatto however, seems to be the additive that causes him to have the addictive symptoms. I read once that the annatto seed was once made into a paste and used as war paint in a particular tribe. Well, after watching my son once he has had the annatto I can see why warriors would be successful in battle under its influence.

In addition to affecting him through his food colors also affect him through medications and hygiene products. We noticed that once when he used shampoo with artificial yellow the skin on his neck broke out every time he showered. Also, chapstick or other products that go on skin make him itch.

This school year my son begged me to let him eat some things that our school cafeteria provides. I reluctantly agreed, after all he is going to have to make his own decisions about what he puts in his body as he gets older and is out without me more. It isn't that he was eating things that contained yellow or annatto but he was eating foods that are processed. He has had the stomach flu twice and has had headaches more frequently, plus his muscles have begun to cramp more and more. Last week we made the decision for me to resume packing his lunch and I think that we both already notice a difference.

There is no doubt in my mind that the rise in autism, ADHD, ADD, etc. is a direct consequence of our trend toward processed "quick" food. I feel so blessed to have read that chapter and found my son. Thank you for making a difference. – Rhonda, USA

[874] Sick and tired of asthma – now have so much energy (November 2009)

I have been failsafe for over 4 years now and my life has changed dramatically because of it. Before I tried the diet I was constantly unwell with chronic sinus and hayfever, period problems, varied stomach problems and lethargy. The worst thing was the asthma - it was getting so bad I couldn't read a book to my children or talk on the phone for very long. Every day was a struggle to get through.

I have found out that I am intolerant to gluten, salicylates, amines, preservative etc. Since starting the diet, I haven't had asthma medication for over 4 years - it is wonderful to be able to breathe.

Other things the diet helped me with are: changing a constant huge amount of phlegm to a small amount; getting rid of my permanent blocked nose; no more constant colds and infections (sinus

and chest); changed daily headaches to rare ones; improved PMT and periods a large amount; got rid of my constant indigestion and reflux; removed the permanent frown from my face and changed it to a smile!!

I now have lots of energy and do Boxercise classes which I would never have been able to manage before. Going up a hill on my daily walk is no longer a problem. It is great to have so much energy.

I want to thank you so much for your book, it has changed my life. I just wish doctors would tell you about trying different diets to help asthma - I could have done with knowing years ago! – Rosemaree, SA (first provided in 2005 then updated as above)

[871] 635: Severe asthma-type reaction to 635 (November 2009)

I have been aware of an intolerance to MSG (621) for many years and mainly suffer with severe headaches, dehydration and nausea. I steer clear of any preservatives and flavour enhancers wherever possible, particularly those with #6 at the beginning. My diet rarely incorporates any packaged or prepared canned foods, I have eaten take away food but not on a regular basis. In a previous life, I did eat packaged and prepared foods!

A few years ago, whilst a friend was cooking a store bought, marinated chicken dish, I suffered blocked nose, mucous throat and headache, not from eating, but being in the surrounding area.

A few weeks ago I suffered another episode of severely blocked nose, thick mucous in throat and tightness in throat/chest, almost wheezing like an asthmatic. The symptoms started within 10 minutes of eating a Campbells "Chunky" Chicken & Vegetable, Curry with Rice meal in a tin left behind by a guest. Although it claims "No Added MSG No Artificial Flavours No Added Preservatives" it does contain 635. This is my first reaction to 635 as far as I am aware. I am a fit and healthy 54 year old and don't have asthma. I will certainly be checking for this number now. - Lee, WA

[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

[848] Not only behaviour but also tonsillitis and asthma improve on diet (August 2009)

I would like to thank you for your wonderful book and website supporting the diet. Now we are in the full swing of it and have seen the difference, we share your horror at the unnecessary chemicals

that are in our diet. I have become the crusader amongst our group of friends (many with preschool aged children) for feeding families "like Grandma used to".

My favourite line at the moment is "You have to think, when our parents were young, they ate apples, pears, maybe the occasional orange. All the other stuff - like Watermelon, Strawberries, Grapes - was a luxury and MAY have been eaten on special occasions". The other is to point out to people that the "Healthy Food Pyramid" that is drummed into us at every turn, that we should be eating, only suggests 2 serves of fruit a day. If this is, for the majority of the time, two pears or a pear and a delicious apple, I am sure my children (day 3 reactors!) will 'survive' in this world!

Update You will be pleased to know that we are now almost 4 months into the diet, and are so happy with the change in our children. Not only has their behaviour changed we have now noticed that we have had two other (surprising!) results:

- The boys had recurrent tonsillitis (once every five-six weeks for the past 18 months) which they have no longer have ... we had refused the operation before Christmas (to get tonsils and adenoids out) because we didn't want them to go under a general anaesthetic and were hoping the diet would help. And yay! It has!
- Our boys normally start preventers for asthma at the end of Feb and go through until at least November ... We haven't used preventers, or even relievers once since starting the diet.

So ... whilst we started mainly for behaviour, we have so many great other effects. - Jenny, NSW

[835] Alzheimers, asthma and apnoea (July 2009)

I thought I would share with you briefly my experience of treating my wife who was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. Apart from the Alzheimer's diagnosis, she suffered from asthma, sleep apnoea, was unable to speak more than one word at a time and was going down hill very fast. After a lot of research I decided to put her on to a 90% raw food diet and after one month, she started to speak the odd phrase. This was marvellous and only encouraged me to continue. However the amazing thing was after a few months her asthma symptoms began to disappear and she was able to reduce her dependence on puffers. After six months even the preventer puffer was reduced to almost zero and a year later in consultation with the doctor stopped using puffers altogether. Two and a half years later, she has been symptom free for two winters so confidently predict it has gone forever. Oh by the way her sleep apnoea has gone as well. This experience of curing asthma with raw food is not unique as I have subsequently found out. When visiting your website I realised the raw food diet was eliminating additives. Commercial raw food has other problems i.e. pesticides, growth promoters etc but the experience of using commercial raw food has been worthwhile. Would like to eat organic but currently that's not possible. When visiting, we eat normal food and don't expect others to provide the food we use at home. - by email

[826] 621: 635: Headaches from 621, asthma-type reaction to 635 (July 2009)

I have been aware of an intolerance to MSG (621) for many years and mainly suffer with severe headaches, dehydration and nausea. I steer clear of any preservatives and flavour enhancers wherever possible, particularly those with #6 at the beginning. My diet rarely incorporates any

packaged or prepared canned foods, I have eaten take away food but not on a regular basis. In a previous life, I did eat packaged and prepared foods!

A few years ago, whilst a friend was cooking a store bought, marinated chicken dish, I suffered blocked nose, mucous throat and headache, not from eating, but being in the surrounding area.

I recently suffered an episode of severely blocked nose, thick mucous in throat and tightness in throat/chest, almost wheezing like an asthmatic. The symptoms started within 10 minutes of eating a Campbells "Chunky" Chicken & Vegetable, Curry with Rice meal in a tin left behind by a guest. Although it claims "No Added MSG No Artificial Flavours No Added Preservatives" it does contain 635. This is my first reaction to 635 as far as I am aware. I am a fit and healthy 54 year old and don't have asthma. I will certainly be checking for this number now. - Lee, WA

[812] Asthma researchers ignore the evidence - breathlessness, sleep apnea, tachycardia, pins and needles, anxiety from preservatives (June 2009)

What is amazing to me is that the researchers don't seem to be aware that some preservatives and flavour enhancers can also give you asthma or make symptoms worse. I've experienced this first hand. I regularly consumed a so called healthy cereal every day that contained dried fruit which was laced with preservatives. My symptoms of breathlessness, sleep apnea, tachycardia, pins and needles, anxiety etc. kept getting worse. I ended up in casualty at the local hospital several times, but they could not discover the cause. I had heart checks, x-rays, stress tests and still no answers. Finally at a party one of the guests refused certain food and proceeded to tell me about her allergic reactions to food additives. As she was describing her reactions, I realised her symptoms were identical to mine. She told me about your website. I went home that night and threw out everything in my pantry with food additives and I slowly recovered. I'm very careful now, but eating out is a challenge and that is where I get caught out, even when I choose healthy options such as a salad or sandwich. At the airport I had a turkey and salad sandwich and within 20 minutes I was really struggling to breath - Miryana by email.

[783] Morning sickness and salicylates 2 (June 2009)

I suffered from terrible morning, afternoon and evening sickness when pregnant with my son (now 7). The only foods I could eat that didn't cause problems were cheese on toast, bananas and chocolate milkshakes.[these foods are all low in salicylates although not failsafe due to amines] We also had problems with breastfeeding - he would throw up most of what I fed him. Perhaps he was sensitive to salicylates passing through the breast milk. Needless to say we gave up on that after struggling for two months. (he was far happier on solids at 2 and a half months). Later down the track when trying to solve his behaviour and asthma issues, we tried (as a last resort) failsafe eating, and guess what? we are both sensitive to salicylates but not amines. If I'd known then what I know now... by email

[714] Salicylates: this time we are 100% committed and the results are clear (February 2009)

My 7yo son suffered from asthma, and my 5yo daughter was borderline ODD, complete with sneaky poos, bedwetting - the whole rack of symptoms. We removed preservatives and colours from their

diet with fantastic results - mainly from the removal of propionates and sulphites. I noticed, though, that my daughter's behaviour seemed to deteriorate when she had certain foods such as vegemite, soy sauce etc.

We did not do the elimination diet correctly the first time. We made the usual mistakes - not enough commitment, cheating, coming off it too quickly – and were misdirected in our conclusions - thought salicylates were fine and amines were the baddies. We decided to put our daughter back on the elimination diet after she failed to improve when we removed amines.

This time we are 100% committed and the results are clear. Our daughter was fine the first day of the salicylate challenge, a bit iffy the second, and by day 3 she was back to pre-diet days, even resorting to deliberately (in front of me) urinating on the lounge room floor. Add to this a constant headache, tummy pains and a small rash on both legs. I promptly cleaned out the fridge, and removed all salicylates from the house. Two days on and we are gradually improving, but what a shock!

An even bigger shock was my son's reaction. He was always 'the good one' and didn't seem to have any behavioural issues apart from asthma, which has improved greatly since we removed additives from their diet. By the end of the second day, he had stolen a can of coke from the fridge (dad's stock - banned for our kids) and drank it outside when he thought I couldn't see. Screaming, shouting, fighting, defiance - completely unexpected from him. Two days on and he is quite remorseful - and determined to stay away from 'those foods'. He has also woken up today with big black rings under his eyes, and a wet bed. No coincidence, I think.

I never imagined that food chemicals could have such a significant effect on health and behaviour. My daughter starts school next year, and we can now look forward to a future with more enthusiasm and positivity than we did 3 months ago. – *by email, NSW*

[708] Chronic asthma and colours, 621, 635, sulphites, amines; inattentive ADHD and salicylates (November 2008)

I just wanted to say huge thank you for your work (a significant understatement). I saw you at a Canberra talk and our family has been failsafe for 12 months now. We now have two family members - my husband and my seven-year-old - asthma free thanks to failsafe. My husband was previously a chronic asthmatic and now he has improved so much that he doesn't even need to use a preventer nor does my seven-year-old year old! My eldest son aged eight is now excelling in school due to failsafe - he previously had all the symptoms of inattentive ADHD - head in the clouds, extremely forgetful, vague and much more. The school teachers have all remarked on his improvement and his school reports reflect the same. The biggest asthma culprits for my husband and seven-year-old year old are 621, 635, sulphites, amines and yellow and red colours. The culprit for my 8 year old is salicylates. When we did the RPAH diet and salicylate challenge he fell asleep in the classroom at school and had to be taken home. - *Lindy, Canberra (very grateful Mum)*

[703] 210: Croup, asthma, behaviour related to benzoates or sulphites (November 2008)

My daughter ended up with croup and asthma from doing the sulphite challenge and that she also ended up with croup, asthma and a chest infection from doing the lemonade (sodium benzoate 211) challenge. Her behaviour changed so much with the lemonade challenge that her pre-school teacher asked me to stop the challenge on the second day. This still resulted in high behaviour and many other conflicts with anyone she was around, very short fuse amongst other things – *reader, Qld*

[698] 635: rash, headache, asthma, rhinitis in 8 yo due to the 635 flavour enhancers (November 2008)

Three years ago, my son who is now 11 began getting rashes, headaches, always tired, mild asthma, allergic rhinitis, even his personality changed. He had a very bad allergic reaction once to a bought breakfast, but was not hospitalised. My doctor is great and referred him to a paediatrician who specialised in allergies.

I did elimination diets (wheat and dairy) and the rest of it as suggested by the doctor, however it wasn't until I started going through all of the labels that I found this 635 number in soup which he loved, and I and the doctor thought was relatively healthy. It wasn't on my list of additives, so I searched on the internet and found your website.

I then found flavour enhancers in many different foods and just eliminated them - all of the 6XX numbers. The worst was probably chicken noodle soup/ chicken & corn soup, which my son loved. It is an ongoing process as I find it pops up everywhere in foods which you may think are 'healthy', I must read the label even on brands I have bought before as they change, meat and chickens etc. It is also frustrating when things are labelled plain/natural/NO MSG as it makes it difficult for my son and anyone else. I must ask when buying take away as I find they add it to chips, without you asking for it or telling you.

When he had the soup his reaction was quite evident and within a few hours of having it - rashes, headache, rolling on the floor ... He once came home sick and with a massive headache - I later found he had had chips labelled 'natural' but with flavour enhancers.

My son was quite happy to stop eating these foods as he was much happier without them. I think children are much more rational about this than adults. I now cook my own chickens, soup, pies and go to a butcher who is happy to give me additive free meat.

I know it is difficult to cover everything but I think it important to eliminate flavour enhancers as a first step and for doctors to suggest this, as eliminating milk and wheat (which is what we did first) is much more difficult and has nutritional consequences, while flavour enhancers provide no nutrition. It is not something that is tested for in the blood test/scratch test. – *Chris, by email*

[695] Cough and bedwetting due to soy (November 2008)

I found your book about 10 months ago after my four year old son Jacob was hospitalised for an asthma attack combined with the dreaded influenza A that children were dying of. Well, that was enough to scare me into action. We started the diet as soon as I had finished reading the book and soon the children all became well ...I couldn't remember a time when Jacob hadn't had a snotty nose or cough.

Then three months ago, Jacob's behaviour started to escalate. He also developed this phlegm that he couldn't seem to get rid of. He wasn't sick as such, no temperature just a very phlegmy cough. I asked my doctor about it and he said it was an irritation and would never go away. Well I didn't believe that for a second because it went away when we first started the diet.

Jacob's behaviour was so awful I was at the end of my tether to the point where I didn't want my husband to leave the house and leave me with the kids. I went to your checklist of common mistakes (I thought I had the diet down pat by now). It said Annatto 160b - in the soy yoghurt I was giving the kids. So I started making my own and after a week I had a little angel again. Unbelievable. No more Annatto 160b for our family - never again.

But Jacob still had the cough. Then I stopped making soy yoghurt for a week. Jacob drinks ricemilk instead of soy milk anyway and I noticed a difference in his phlegm. After three weeks without soy, the phlegm, snotty nose and funny rings under his eyes had gone. He also stopped wetting the bed, and that returned when I made a slip up recently. – *Carolyn, SA*

[691] 220: Racing heart (tachycardia) and asthma from sulphites (November 2008)

In response to your newsletter regarding 220 effects to the heart, I first had a reaction to wine a couple of years ago. I woke in the middle of the night with my heart absolutely racing - I paced the floor, drank plenty of water and tried to relax. Eventually I was able to go back to sleep. This has happened regularly since and loving wine I have found it difficult to control. Fortunately we have a cellar of aged wine and over the time I have found that I am able to tolerate aged red wine and better quality white wines without effect. A single glass of some white wines, however, will give me palpitations and wake me through the night with my heart racing.

Recently I have also been able to link my reaction to episodes of asthma. The first at the age of 30, and the second at 35. On the second occasion I had been drinking 2-3 glasses of white wine every day during a two week holiday. Whilst I was able to select wines that didn't affect my heart at that level, by the end of the second week I experienced my second ever bout of asthma. Recently I also ate some cheese and suffered palpitations. Checking the label showed that it had sulphites listed. – *Amanda, by email*

[cheese does not normally contain sulphites unless flavoured, e.g. – Mersey Valley sweet chili contains two sulphites: 223 listed as preservative and 221 listed as antioxidant.]

[688] 220: Cough from sulphites (November 2008)

I've always enjoyed the occasional glass of - maybe 1 or 2 a week on average. About two years ago we joined a mail order wine club and now I have up to six glasses per week, not a huge amount but it's three to six times what I used to have. The wine club has been really enjoyable for us but for well over 12 months I've had a mild mucous forming cough every morning sometimes lasting all day. I've been to the doctor and it's 'nothing'.

In the last failsafe newsletter there was a bit about sulphites and asthma which I basically skipped over because I don't get asthma. But a little later into the evening a light came on in my head. 220 in wine is sulphites, so I went to the best website in the world called the food intolerance network- yay

for it - and looked up the sulphite connection with asthma. I now think my cough may be a mild asthma type response and I've noticed a slight wheeziness occasionally. I went off any food containing sulphites for one week and guess what? No cough for that time. I still love my wine with dinner and cutting down has seemed to lessen the problem. – *Leanne*

[685] 220: Twenty years to recognise asthma due to sulphites (November 2008)

I first noticed something was not right when I was 18 years old. Mum had brought a Chinese meal home for the family to share. Within 30 mins of finishing the meal my breathing began to get laboured and I started to sweat. My nose blocked up and I felt like I was suffocating. I thought I had a reaction to MSG and decided to leave it at that. I didn't tell mum as I decided I would just not eat from that shop again.

I would often get the same reaction if I went to a restaurant so for the next 16 years I always thought I got food poisoning easily and avoided restaurants and Chinese food.

About four years ago we ate a fish and anchovy meal at the home of some friends. Around 2am in the morning I started going incredibly hot, sweaty, fast heartbeat and felt like I was suffocating. I couldn't breath but did not link it to asthma. I had diarrhoea but no vomiting. No nausea. I had no idea what was wrong with me. I thought it was bad food poisoning due to the fish. I thought I was going to die. It was that severe. I struggled until 4am when I thought I should call an ambulance. I got out of bed and almost collapsed. I was dizzy, seeing flying shapes and hallucinating. I took some antihistamine because my husband said it was more like an allergic reaction and 45 mins later I started to improve slightly so I did not call the ambulance.

I was 34 years old then. I didn't eat out for the next four years and told all my friends "I get food poisoning easily". Earlier this year I decided to see an allergist as I was convinced I was allergic to fish – as similar reactions have happened when I have eaten anchovies - and wanted to be able to eat out again. Skin testing showed hayfever but no fish or food allergies. The allergist mentioned sulphite intolerance to me and when he presented a list of the foods that commonly have sulphites in them, it all came together. Suddenly, everything that I thought gave me irritable bowel had sulphites in them.

I knew that certain mueslis, all sausages and dried fruits made me very sick. I could never drink wine because it always left me with a heavy chest, flushing and I would feel every breath was an effort. Always diarrhoea and asthma and stomach cramps. I never linked the asthma to the sulphites. I always thought it was coincidental. Sometimes I'd get a rash. I know now the worst foods for me are sausages (instant stomach cramps, diarrhoea), wine, cold meats, certain mueslis with dried fruit. I have eliminated all sulphites from my diet since March 2008. I am now off my asthma preventer and feel great. I know now I can tolerate a small amount of sulphite, like in Vegemite but if I cross a threshold (particularly restaurant meals) I suffer terribly. I am too scared to eat out again. I have since taken my 10-year-old son off all sulphites and it's no surprise his asthma has improved considerably.- *Yvette, NSW*

[680] Nocturnal enuresis (bedwetting) due to diet (September 2008)

We have seen some huge improvements in my 6-year-old son's nocturnal enuresis. He had not had any dry nights since he was 3 years old. After making the changes below he started to have some dry nights (3-4 a week). Now he has been dry for the last 9 nights.

- we have started him on A2 milk
- we used to have a jug of diluted orange juice in the fridge, now the kids drink mainly water with the occasional magic cordial.
- he was eating broccoli almost every night and we have not had any for 4 weeks now
- I have been more diligent in not buying any products with preservative 282 in it
- generally more aware of products full of additives, colours and preservatives since hearing you speak and reading your books
- our son did love to eat salami and ham (deli), so he has not had this for 4 weeks.

His bladder capacity is so much bigger and he can hold on for longer in the day. His mood swings are virtually resolved and you can reason with him if he is wanting something that is not appropriate, food or otherwise. My husband and I can both see that he is more confident in himself and sociable, making him a lovely child to be around. He usually has redipped once or twice in winter for exacerbation of asthma symptoms, but so far has not required any this winter, despite having a cold last week, so that is looking positive. Thank you for motivating me to review what I was putting in my family's mouths. We don't have access to fast foods living in the country, so that was never an issue. With a few simple changes to my son's diet, the improvements have been remarkable. The whole family is now reaping the benefit of these changes and so will continue to be more aware of what is in the food that we are eating. Thanks again for your passion and drive. – *Paula, NSW*

[652] A2 and UHT milk better tolerated than fresh (September 2008)

My stepson has suffered from black rings under the eyes, continually stuffed up and asthma attacks since he was a baby. After speaking to you in Brisbane we decided to try A2 milk.

On A2, the rings cleared up straight away, the snorting stopped and after a while we realised there had been no asthma attacks. Then he spent a few months living with us overseas where A2 is not available. However, there is also no fresh milk - all milk is UHT (mainly Pauls). There were no side effects.

On returning to Brisbane for a week's holiday, we were off guard and purchased plain milk. He had 3 small asthma attacks (required ventolin) in the week. He's now back on the UHT again no effects. We don't know why, whether it is the heat process or not, but it definitely is not a figment of our imagination. - *by email*

[642] Asthma update two years on (May 2008)

Richie's original story ([402] March 2006) described how limiting his intake of preservatives and sulphite containing foods such as mince meat, prawns, pizza, processed meats etc had helped him with breathing problems he'd suffered for over 20 years.

His update in April 2008 reads: You probably get many emails of thanks and I have sent one or two previously but what the hell, I'm going to send you another one just to let you know how much my life has improved since taking your advice. I thank you with every positive emotion I have for who you are, what you stand for and for changing my life. I have no more breathing difficulties, no more sleep problems, no more anxiety and all this leads to no more stress. No money can buy this. I have been educating the people in my life on how damaging additives, preservatives, sulphites etc. are and sent links to your site to everyone in my address book - Richie, Vic.

[638] Getting to the bottom of asthma/rhinitis (May 2008)

We have gone failsafe before but I never managed to get to get to the bottom of the problem for my son's asthma/allergic rhinitis. I knew it was food, and suspected colours and preservatives. The dietitian you recommended was very good and we had good results with the elimination diet. Because of the asthma she wouldn't challenge MSG, preservatives or colours. It turns out our son started to wheeze about day 6 of the salicylate challenge. After two days of the amine challenge we gave up because he was so ANGRY (but not wheezing). Since then we have been to an allergist and discovered he is allergic to dust mites, some grass pollens and horse hair (we knew this one). We know we can minimise his symptoms and reactions to these allergens by keeping his diet failsafe, and are considering the de-sensitization path for at least the dust mites – email, Vic.

[637] One-liners (May 2008)

- Our daughter was diagnosed with asthma at the age of two. I could not understand how we could eat an incredible diet, mainly organic, loads of fruit, vegetables and wonderful food, and she would cough and wheeze all night. Since I found your books our lives have changed. It turns out our daughter (now four) reacts to salicylates, anything artificial, and smaller reactions to amines - Naomi, NSW.
- My boys can now play like the other kids without getting asthma - thanks to you - by email.
- My son hasn't been hospitalised with asthma since we started failsafe two years ago but I have just found out that his urticaria can be caused by food, especially annatto as he accidentally ate quite a bit at vacation care over the school holidays - email, NSW.

[629] 'Severe and unpredictable asthma' due to sulphites (February 2008)

Our food journey started with me picking up your Fed Up with Asthma book from the bookstore after our three year-old had just experienced a bout of wheezing. I read it all in one sitting and was left both horrified and hopeful. We decided that since we had nothing to lose that we would try the diet as a family in an attempt to pinpoint the trigger of our daughter's asthma. I was optimistic about finding a trigger but not really expecting to find it. Grace did the sulphite challenge with an apricot fruit bar as recommended by our dietitian - she had no reaction to the salicylate or amine challenges. I gave her the bar at the start of a short car journey. Within 5 minutes of finishing the

bar, her breathing had become so laboured and wheezing so loud that I had to stop the car to give her Ventolin.

Over the next few months I repeated the challenge with a different brand of fruit bar, berry flavour and again with 4 dried apricots. Same results each time. Prior to the diet she would eat dried fruit, sausages and non-organic grapes quite often and was on a substantial twice daily preventer medication regimen as well as Ventolin about 1-2 times per week. Funnily enough it had never occurred to us that 'healthy' food could possibly trigger asthma.

We had been told by the paediatrician that Grace had severe and unpredictable asthma and required aggressive preventative treatment to avoid the life-threatening attacks that she had experienced. Obviously we now strictly avoid any sulphites and Grace no longer requires Ventolin or preventers. We have found that her asthma is indeed predictable and is treatable without any medication. I would even go as far as to say that she no longer has asthma, she merely exhibits asthma-like symptoms in response to sulphites.

Grace's growth had been stunted by her asthma medication. From her growth chart you can see the month she swapped to the stronger medication and also when we took her off it (post-diet). She grew 1cm a week for two months after she came off the meds. Her rate of growth is now normal. – reader, Qld

[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

[626] Asthma in an adult from Nurofen (February 2008)

I was diagnosed with asthma last year. I am 43 years old. This year I took two Nurofen tablets - after eliminating them from my intake last year when I went on the elimination diet - before a minor medical procedure. (I had not related Nurofen to my asthma at this stage). Within two hours of taking the Nurofen and while I was still in the doctor's surgery I had an asthma attack. Both the doctor and I were very surprised. The asthma attack lasted for four hours! I had had no other introduction of foods etc in the lead up to this minor procedure, and the doctor told me that many asthmatics are finding that they can not take Nurofen. I have added Nurofen to the 'don't take' list. – Kathleen C, by email

[602] Aching joints began during pregnancy (February 2008)

I began the elimination diet after reading Fed Up with Asthma [now out of print, the asthma information from this book has been incorporated into the 2008 edition of Fed Up]. I was pregnant with our second child. My first pregnancy was fraught with pain from aching joints, hips especially, from which I'd never suffered before. The pain was very great and continued after childbirth, though not troubling me much, just now and then. My joint movement continued to be impaired. In this

pregnancy the pain began in the first trimester, whereas it had begun late in the previous pregnancy. I suffered much sleeplessness and worried how I would last 9 months like this. After 2-3 weeks on the diet (dairy and gluten-free as well) I no longer needed ventolin at all, just one puff daily of my preventer (I'd been using ventolin up to 8 times daily with little effect and 4 puffs of the preventer). Also, no joint pain at all, and the return of a normal range of joint motion. - Elizabeth, by email

[597] One liners (November 2007)

- We have just spent 3 weeks on the elimination diet. We are amazed at the positive change in all of us, (a hyperactive, asthmatic, eczema-stricken three year old boy; a 40 year old dad who has suffered from chronic asthma all his life; and a 34 year old mum who thought she felt pretty healthy ... until the last three weeks, where I have felt better than ever) – Julie
- We saw the school program on Today Tonight and my eight-year-old son looked at me every time one of his symptoms (asthma, bed wetting, sneaky poos, cradle cap, irritability, poor concentration) was listed. I thought I was a pretty healthy provider of food as I do a lot of home cooking but it is scary to see what is in some of your everyday foods. – by email, SA

[585] 102: Lifethreatening asthma from artificial colour 102 (tartrazine, yellow #5) (November 2007)

My son was a premie with a family history of asthma and as a little one had wheezing episodes throughout his life. We were very experienced with asthma attacks and had all the medicines and equipment at home. My son had always eaten natural, homecooked foods as we just tend to not be junk food people. Just before Christmas when he was 19 months old I had commercially prepared eggnog in the house and gave him a tiny glass as a treat. Within 15 minutes he went into the most severe asthma attack we had ever seen. We gave him his medication and used his nebulizer, but he was not coming around. He had had a number of asthma attacks and this was nothing like it.

Our pediatrician had us rush him to the hospital. He was given immediate care - very unusual in US hospitals. The doctors didn't really know what to do. They gave us megadoses of all his medicines, put him on pure oxygen, put IV's in him but he didn't come around. They called Children's Hospital who sent down a team of 4. Our pediatrician stayed with us for hours and his daughter was due in at the airport, so we knew it was serious. The doctors from Children's ended up using Atrovent, a medicine at that time used only for adults. Our hospital didn't even know to use it on children. Ryan came around but it was very dicey.

After Ryan got out of the hospital I looked up asthma and found a British book that mentioned major chemical triggers for asthma including tartrazine a yellow food dye. So I had an idea that it might have been the cause. I then met with a specialist who felt that I was probably right, but there was no test because it was not a true allergy, but that I should avoid it because the next time we may not be so lucky. He said that often it is subsequent exposures that are more serious. Ryan did bite an Andes mint about a year later and once put a green M&M in his mouth and then rapidly removed it. Both times he had microscopic amounts of the candy and both times had very dramatic reactions. So we avoid it very seriously. – Heather, USA

[574] One-liners (August 2007)

- My grandchildren's asthma is now much better. I managed to convince one of my daughters of the connection between the 'healthy' apricot bars she was feeding him and her son's attacks (despite a very dubious husband and other grandma!) and my granddaughter's behaviour and asthma has improved after removal from her diet of the highly coloured treats which she was so fond.
- We have just spent 3 weeks on the elimination diet, using " Fed Up with ADHD" and the "Failsafe Cookbook". We are amazed at the positive change in all of us, (a hyperactive, asthmatic, eczema-stricken three- year-old boy; a 40 year old dad who has suffered from chronic asthma all his life; and a 34-year-old mum who thought she felt pretty healthy...until the last three weeks, where I have felt better than ever - Julie, email.

[573] His asthma disappeared (August 2007)

We put my 6-year-old grandson on the failsafe diet for ADHD and his 4-year-old brother (who has had 2 serious hospital admissions for asthma) has seen his asthma disappear!! Another off spin from the diet my headaches which I blamed on shift work and lack of sleep have disappeared except two times when we didn't have the boys and bought Chinese and went out for Thai both times I woke through the night with a raging headache. And my husband who has been short tempered through our 28 years of marriage, has had a change in temperament/ behaviour, for the better. - Kathy by email.

[571] Why asthmatics need to know about salicylates: An interview with Matt's mother (August 2007)

How long have you been failsafe?

My 8 year old son Matt is a severe asthmatic who has been on the diet for almost a year. We of course have our good days and bad days in making him stick to it, but regardless of that he has done so well and has not had to go to hospital since he has been on the diet, and for a child who has been hospitalized multiple times every year since he was 6 months old this is quite an achievement.

What made you decide to try diet?

I love my children and as a mother I could not continue to blindly pump drugs into Matt every morning, night and during the day, it made me feel sick and I couldn't see that it was actually making an awful lot of difference to his asthma, in fact it seemed to be getting worse. Just before we started the elimination diet Ventolin seemed to have no effect on Matt at all, only prednisolone seemed to alleviate an attack, which as you can imagine frightened the hell out of me. The doctors all said the same things, either give it to him or he could die.

How quickly did the diet kick in?

Amazingly, within a few days. We could not believe how quickly. I remember Matt had been 'trying' to play basketball, we would give him two puffs of ventolin before the game as the doctor had

instructed and then the poor thing would try in vain to run up and down the court, but he really didn't want to play and used to ask to be 'subbed' off. The first week of the diet he had a game on the Thursday, so rather than pre-puff, I asked if he needed a puff - he said no - and went out on the court. I sat there nervously with his puffer in my hand at the ready, and off he went - running up and down the court, he was only subbed off when the coach did the normal process of taking equal turns between the players. He came off at the end with a bright red face, sweaty head and a big smile - and a noticeably absent wheeze. I could not believe it - that was when I knew this was going to work.

Which food chemicals affect Matt's asthma (e.g. sulphites, salicylates, benzoates, colours?)

Artificial red colours seem to have the most dramatic effect. Salicylates definitely, although salicylates by themselves e.g. apples, tend to creep up on him, taking a few days and even then the reaction seems milder than artificial colours. Sulphites definitely. Amines do not seem to present the same level of problem, but I am extremely cautious with them also. Have you done challenges or did you work it out from mistakes?

I am very loathe to do challenges, we tend to learn from his or my mistakes. The results are so obvious, usually that night he and I are up all night with his terrible croupy cough, he becomes unreasonable, eczema flairs up, his feet crack and bleed. There is no mistaking it when it happens, and I can't bring myself to deliberately create the situation. The only real trial I have done is with fruit because it is what he misses the most, golden delicious apples for three days, third day severe asthma attack, cracked feet - lasted 3 days. Bananas no apparent problem. Half a mango - within hours agitated, croupy cough leading to an attack that night, but gone within a couple of days.

What happens when he breaks his diet?

It depends on what he eats. Sometimes it kind of creeps up on me that he seems to be a bit wheezy, but nothing dramatic happens, which concerns me because I think maybe the 'build up factor' is occurring, so I put him back on the elimination diet and start again (we are doing this at the moment, because I have found out that he has been 'sharing' lunch at school and also put in a tuck order without me knowing!) I have reviewed his lunch box and was able to buy your cookbook, so now he is getting enough interesting things and variety so he feels that he is not missing out!

Sometimes it is so painfully obvious that he has eaten something, he just comes home and starts coughing. This happened before Christmas with those rotten candy canes that all the kids give at school - Christmas is a nightmare for me and Matt, he has to say no to things he loves and I have to be the 'lolly detective' to make sure he survives! He came home one day from school and was clearly having an attack, in addition to all of the horrible behavioural issues that accompany such food, I just said point blank - what on earth have you had at school? - and of course it had been a candy cane. School presents the biggest challenge on this diet.

What kinds of foods is he most likely to eat when he breaks his diet?

It depends, lollies, chocolates - things he sees all of the other kids having that he can't. When he did his 'secret' tuck order it was a ham and cheese sandwich and a strawberry milk. Funnily enough most

people would think this was quite a 'healthy' lunch!! That night it meant a serious asthma attack for him, and all types of horrible behavior!

Has he been able to reduce medication?

He hasn't needed steroids since he started the diet 12 months ago and over summer he went for three months without any Ventolin. He really only has it now if he is having an attack usually because we have made a mistake or he has had something at school that he shouldn't have. After the ham sandwich and strawberry milk incident he had one dose of two puffs per night for a week, prior to that it had probably been about two months since he had a puff.

How about exercise?

Matt is very active, he plays basketball and football and swims four nights a week in a squad team.

Has Matt's doctor been supportive of diet?

No, I gave up discussing much of anything with the gp/specialist some time ago. Their answer has always been puff at all costs, nothing else will work, his asthma is totally unrelated to diet.

Do you have an asthma plan drawn up with your doctor for Matt?

We do have for school, but it is pretty standard stuff and says he should be puffed twice before any physical activity. He no longer needs and because of his age now the school more or less leave it up to him unless there was an emergency.

Do you measure peak flow readings? if so, do you have any examples of what certain foods do to Matt' readings?

No, we have never measured peak flow - the doctor has never suggested it.

Did you join the failsafeasthma group and if so has it been helpful?

I just joined - so will let you know.

Did you see a dietitian about the diet?

I met with the dietitian you recommended - she was fantastic, gave me some really good tips and excellent guidance. Other than a couple of lunch box modifications she thought we were very much on the right track.

Any other comments?

I would love to see an action group in schools - school lunch is the hardest part of this diet. I would love to be able to refer the school to some committee etc that are educating the educators.

Also, I need to mention something else in relation to Matt's school work. Mid last year Matt's teacher told us that she thought he would have to repeat the year, due to his inability to focus and complete work, also his reading and writing were below standard for his age. She couldn't understand what the problem was, as he is obviously an intelligent boy, however nothing she did

was working. We started the diet in the school holidays a few weeks later. We had a parent teacher interview at the end of the following term. The teacher told us that she couldn't believe the difference in Matt, and wanted to know what we had done as the change was quite profound. He was now able to focus and when he couldn't he actually removed himself and asked her if he could go to a quiet place to concentrate!! His reading, writing, completion of tasks, virtually everything had improved out of sight. So much so that she said there was absolutely no need to hold him back a year.

I can tell if Matt or I have made a mistake - as much by his behaviour as his coughing.

Once again THANK YOU so much for continuing this wonderful work - it has changed our lives.

[565] One-liners (May 2007)

- My sons aged 9 and 4 – now additive free - both had croup in the last week and the younger one even had a cold as well but neither of them had asthma which is unusual for them. – Kylie
- We just had our Tu Beshvat holiday (New Year of the Trees), ate a good bit of dried fruit, and guess what? - more headaches, asthmatic spasms, gut in an uproar, and the boys nervier – by email.

[559] 'Ultra-healthy' diet led to asthma and debilitating health issues (May 2007)

My mother and I have known for years that we are allergic to aspirin. We both react with ringing in the ears, nausea, vertigo, lethargy, and I even lost consciousness once. I avoid salicylates in cosmetics and toiletries at all costs, but my health has steadily declined (I am 24). My mother and I both have had doctors mystified for years with strange and debilitating health issues. They told my mother oh you have lupus, no you don't, yes you do, no ... so on and so on. Now they have decided that we both have fibromyalgia. None of my doctors have ever mentioned that salicylates are in foods. After coming across this information I realised that almost every diet change recommended to me by the doctors has caused my salicylate intake to be astronomical. It's no wonder I've been in and out of emergency rooms.

Everyone made fun of me calling me a "health nut" because of the supposedly ultra-healthy diet I was on. I was trying to follow the USDA guidelines and eating lots of fruits and vegetables - especially citrus, broccoli, and spinach. The heart healthy recommendations include lots of processed tomato products and using as many different herbs as possible (to give flavor instead of salt). I also was trying to eat as many "naturally sweetened" things as possible. I was eating a lot of fresh oat granola, but it was loaded with honey, almonds, and pretty much anything that comes up high in the sals. I also was using olive oil for cooking, salad dressing, and with herbs instead of butter on bread.

It's no wonder that I was getting worse. I was having so many migraines that I only had about two days a month that I could function without excruciating pain in my head, I had chronic tendonitis, chronic fatigue, if I ever did get to sleep I felt more tired when I woke up than before I slept and I was still gaining weight. Now that I am on the right track I have only had two migraines in two months, and I have only had a tendon problem one day. I was diagnosed with adult onset asthma and was using an inhaler every day and now I only have to use it when I get exposed to salicylates.

My mother and I have both been improving so drastically that everyone is asking us what is going on.
– from the USA

[554] All three children got asthma at the same time (May 2007)

My daughter, now in her late 20s, first got asthma in her early teens. Recently she told me the story of her very first asthma attack. She was away from home camping with friends, when they treated all the children to a soft-serve ice-cream. Within a short time she was having troubles breathing. The other adults identified that she was having an asthma attack, severe enough that they were contemplating taking her to hospital. Prior to having this first attack, my daughter did not have many additives in her diet. I just didn't let my children have lollies, cordials, snack foods, etc as I didn't think they were healthy, and I did a lot of home cooking. Soft-serve ice-cream was just not something that she had ever been given. Over the years, she noticed for herself that if she had soft-serve ice-cream, or drinks and lollies with a certain yellow colour in it, that this would quickly trigger an asthma attack, and that if she didn't consume these things that the number of her asthma attacks were less.

With hindsight (isn't it a wonderful thing) all of my children have got asthma as a result of additives. It was only watching your "Fed Up" DVD that let us work it out. My daughter already knew that certain ice-creams and 102 gave her asthma, but we hadn't realised that other additives, that don't give such an immediate effect, could also be involved. Asthma is in their father's family and their grandmother gets bad asthma, so I was expecting that at least one of my children would get asthma as well. When none of my children had any symptoms of asthma I was relieved. That was, until all three of them got asthma about the same time. My daughter was aged about 13 and the two boys were about 10 and 8. It was very confusing at the time as why all three would suddenly get asthma when none of them had had any symptoms previously. The only thing that changed about that time was that all three of them were getting access through their friends to types of foods that I had never allowed them to have before, like processed snacks that I have now learned are high in additives. At the same time as this, realising that I was not going to be able to stop them from eating whatever they wanted to when they weren't at home, and because of other family pressures, our diet was changed at home so that the snacks, foods and drinks that I now know are full of additives began to be consumed at home. The change was therefore from a largely additive-free diet to the average Australian additive-packed diet. So three asthma-free children changed to three asthma-prone children who all needed to be put onto medication. If only I had known then what I know now. – by email

[546] One-liners (January 2007)

- "If no one's told you recently, thanks so much for all the work you do - you have changed our lives! It's good to have a asthma free, medication free, tummy ache and diarrhoea free child after many wasted futile hours and \$\$\$\$ spent in specialist surgeries!! And even now I've found the answers (thanks to you), still the doctors are not interested in hearing about it. That's what I find so hard to believe! - Fran, NSW.
- 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.

[528] "When we started the diet to help our daughter, we didn't realise it would help our son's asthma too ..." (January 2007)

After years of friends and teachers telling me that my child needed medication (she was a "Jekyll & Hyde" according to one teacher) and doctors who just assumed her problems were hormonal, a girl guide leader noticed my 9-year-old daughter's behaviour problems (fighting, defiance, stealing etc) after eating certain foods and suggested failsafe eating. Within weeks, apart from a few withdrawals, everyone noticed an improvement and now, nine months later – what a difference! When we decided to do the diet to help our daughter, we didn't realise it would help our 6-year-old son's asthma too but he hasn't had an attack or been hospitalised since we started.

Unfortunately my doctor is not very supportive, but I have found a great paediatrician. As she said in the last appointment, the food companies market all of these so called good foods to our children, but she ends up dealing with the backlash e.g. behaviour problems etc.

My son and daughter are now at the stage where they don't ask for "bad" food any more because they know what it does - at a friend's workplace recently he bought them a huge packet of lollies, to which they politely stated "No thank you". When he persisted as to why a couple of 9 and 6 year-olds didn't want lollies, they said "Because I choose to be healthy" which is what they have learnt to say when teased at school about having to be on this diet.

I know now that what I thought was healthy, e.g bread, devon, tomato sauce etc, wasn't healthy for them. During the challenges, my daughter reacted to amines, colours and preservatives. My son reacted violently to the colours with his asthma mostly but hasn't had an attack since we started failsafe. My son couldn't care less what the kids at school say anymore. When they open their packet coloured foods, he says "my mum makes better anyway". When we had a fete at school in September, we had a failsafe sweet stand and the kids loved it. My daughter's 9th birthday went wonderfully - no hyped up kids, a few kids didn't want to come because of the "diet" food, but they missed out. The parents commented on how well they all behaved, even the magician I'd hired couldn't believe how well they played, participated and listened.

My Mum and Dad, Before and After School Care, Church and Girl Guides have been totally supportive of my children's diets. If they have a party/special day etc they always phone me and either ask me to make food (which I'm more than happy to do) or they will ask for certain recipes and all the kids cook. My mother-in-law's "let's not tell mummy and daddy" attitude towards little surprises changed very quickly when she saw how my 9 year old reacted after a "Happy Meal". Ironically, not such a happy time was had!

We have a wonderful restaurant round the corner from home which we used to go to once per month as a treat for the kids – after the diet I phoned them, feeling a little silly, but as long as I tell them what they can make, skinless chicken, sauces etc, they are happy to do it and we haven't had a reaction yet.

At school, even though she has come such a long way in 9 months, my daughter is still being

stereotyped by certain teachers, and sadly even the principal thinks she's not being given a fair go. So, we are starting off at a new school in January 2007 and are all looking forward to this change.

So many people told me not to be stupid, not to do all of this work etc, just put her on medication - I work full-time, plus do the normal mum and wife things in the home, but no matter what happens, we won't go back to "normal" eating ever again. I know it mightn't work for everyone, but it has worked for us.

I would like to say to all parents and caregivers, THE EXTRA HARD WORK IS WORTH IT!!! If you slip up, these things happen, just keep going! It has made our lives soooo much happier. To the Schools: help us parents out - stop having so much processed crap to sell the kids, they get used to having homecooked food without the nasties in it and your days will go much smoother. – 'Maitland mother', NSW [Maitland mother would like to get in touch with other failsafers in the Maitland area, please email via suedengate@ozemail.com.au]

[527] Maya's story (January 2007)

One mother reported that her two year old daughter Maya was a "huge dried fruit eater", consuming two or three packets of dried apricots or similar and two or three fruit bars per week. At three packets of dried fruit per week that's roughly 250 mg per day, or 20 times the Acceptable Daily Intake for an average two year old (0.7mg per kg bodyweight or half a dried apricot for a 2 year old) set by the World Health Organisation. Sulphites are associated with both asthma and cough.

Maya had been diagnosed with suspected bronchiolitis at nine months. "Ever since then, she has had bouts of coughing on a regular and frequent basis, often only two or three weeks apart, usually with a cold but occasionally following a slight fever," wrote Maya's mother. "The coughing can last all night at its worst - but usually is about 40 minute bouts every few hours. There is no apparent wheeze, although sometimes doctors have found a slight wheeze with a stethoscope. Very occasionally, it will resolve gradually after a week or two but usually becomes worse and requires antibiotics". When Maya's cough was diagnosed first as asthma, then as hypersensitive cough receptors, "the paediatrician advised that there was no link to diet and that she would probably grow out of it". Although her mother had never noticed any connection, since avoiding sulphites Maya has been free of cough – reported by phone.

[526] Diet has been a lifesaver (January 2007)

We have had excellent results with diet for our five-year-old daughter who had severe asthma attacks with daily singulair, ventholin, atrovent and also 3 lots of prednisilone within the space of about 3 or 4 months at the beginning of 2006. Since going failsafe in August, not even a cough. I attribute a big part of this success to eliminating both sulphites and artificial colours in particular.

I always felt that there was something more we could do, but just didn't know where to start. My children had what I thought to be such a healthy diet, no cordials, lollies and lots of fruit and dried fruit for snacks. Now I know better.

If telling our story assists in being a catalyst for positive change for other families in situations like ours, that will be wonderful - Monica, NSW

[525] "a second lease on life" (January 2007)

Without sounding corny, it is like my daughter has been given a second lease on life.

Our youngest daughter was diagnosed with asthma at 3 years of age and we then spent many times in and out hospital, with still no improvement. She missed so many days of Preschool, could not run without puffing and requiring her asthma puffer all the time, she also had permanent grey colour under her eyes. We really did not think we would be able to send her to school.....it was that bad.

Then a friend of mine from work went to a Sue Dengate talk ... and the light went on. I contacted my husband immediately and told him about it, cause we had been so worried and that night I cleaned out all my food cupboard and fridge and made it additive-free.

Our daughter is now 6 and is going into Year 1 and has not been in hospital since the month we stopped the additives. We have a little girl who runs, jumps for ages on the trampoline, has lost the grey under her eyes and very happy parents.

Abbey knows that she can't have food with additives and has had to make a lot of sacrifices, but when she said to me a few months after stopping all of that, that she feels better then I know it is all worth it - Kathy, NSW

[524] Open neglect by medical establishment (January 2007) COURAGE AWARD STORY FOR JANUARY 2007 NEWSLETTER

Criminal. It's the only word that comes to mind when I realise that, from the age of 10, I have suffered terribly from asthma; and yet, over the next 23 years, not a single - I repeat NOT A SINGLE - so-called "doctor" ever once asked if my condition might be due to environmental factors", or that it might be caused by the food that I eat... All they ever did was pop a stethoscope on my back, and fill out a prescription for ventolin... "See ya next time, Mark!"

I am so angry and frustrated at the modern medical establishment for their open neglect. For years, almost every morning I would wake with an awful wheeze and a fit of coughing... And it only got worse as my 20's progressed!

When I think back to those days (although I never made the precise connection myself at the time), it got to the point where I would need my puffer after almost every meal! Macca's.. Pizza... Pies... even good 'ole home cooked meals like curries, stews & roasts! As you can imagine, I became very depressed.

I will also confess that I was indeed a smoker as well (I know, I know), but I gave them up around 3 years ago thinking that IT was the main *cause* of my asthma... Oddly enough, I was wrong ... the daily ritual wheezing-fest continued unabated. I was, by then, needing up to 20 puffs a day and my

depression worsened. I remember thinking: "I've given up the damn ciggies, so why aren't I any better?! What's wrong with me?" I began to accept that I would NEVER recover from this ailment.

Then I discovered your website, "Fedup!" ... And oh what a life changer!

I bought the video a few months back and have read much of the material on the website, and with what I now know about salicylates, amines, preservatives and additives of all kinds, it finally all makes sense! So far, my family and I have managed to stop the intake of preservatives and additives (That's the EASY part!) with noticeable improvements too, I might add, especially for my asthma! However, I have not completely recovered yet, and my eldest son - although improved - still has temper problems; so, over the last two days we have finally started tackling the salicylate/amine issue... It's harder I'll admit, BUT, I can already see definite positive-changes from my first-born son, and in my own well-being as well.

It's been around 6 months now since we actively started amending our diet, and overall, my asthma is now highly manageable... (I now use the ventolin only rarely, and the morning-wheeze is completely gone!) But, it's not just that: I finally feel "in control" for the first time ever; I feel that there is now real hope that it could perhaps, go altogether! I really do.

Thank God for you, Sue. Thank you for caring enough about human beings in general, to do what you do. Alright, I'm falling to tears now... so I best go - Mark & family, Vic **See update: story [1080]**

[493] 635: I feel like I am burning (January 2006)

I am 57 years of age last October I got asthma and since then have been rushed to hospitals and doctors with hives and swollen lips and a rise in body heat where I feel like I am burning and my blood pressure rises all of which is very frightening. I have to have an injection of phenergan at that time and am monitored until my body settles and I also take zyrtec on a daily basis and carry a puffer.

Neither the doctor nor myself have been able to pinpoint the cause of these allergic reactions - is it wine? is it peanuts? all the questions with no answers where I have tried to introduce the things I thought may cause it but when I try I gag at the thought because it is so frightening but the next thing I know I am reacting again and not knowing what caused it made me too frightened to get on a train or a plane where I would be confined to not be able to get immediate medical attention.

My brother told me of the ACA segment on food additives and as I had missed it I went onto the site and I am so relieved to now know exactly and I emphasize exactly what it is that is causing these allergic reactions. When I think back to the potato chips, the pie, and the Woolworths chicken. Not that this makes it right it just makes it that now I know but the question remains Why? Why is it allowed to be used? MSG caused such an uproar that people stopped buying products with it added so now another additive is just as bad or worse. I am sure that this additive has caused deaths. When are the companies going to stop using it? When they are being sued? Maybe everyone who has had a reaction to this drug should band together and take on the Companies so that they realize the danger to our lives.

[later] I was so careful yesterday to what I ate during the day and shopped for groceries reading all labels and today I awoke with no hives and no swelling. Such a relief.

When I was at Woolworths purchasing the groceries I asked at the chicken section for the ingredients in the basting etc of the chickens and an employee took out the book of ingredients in their food supplies and read it out to me and there was additive 635 being used in the stuffing so I will not purchase any more chickens from there and I would have purchased one every week as well as when having parties I would purchase 3 to 4. I will assist in any way possible in the future with this additive being withdrawn from use.

[later] I wrote to you last week regarding my allergies and I have had no reactions since refraining from using 635 - Elaine of Rockhampton QLD

[474] One-liners (November 2006)

- After seeing your DVD, we immediately cut out all dried fruit and muesli bars from our two-year-old's diet and were absolutely stunned to see that her persistent cough that usually kicks in around 11pm each night, and has for the last four or five months, suddenly ceased!

[469] 'Old fashioned butcher is safer' - asthma from amines in meat (November 2006)

My amine-sensitive asthmatic daughter has been back on Ventolin daily for the past five weeks. The only amines she gets are from lamb from our local butcher who I know well. When I rang him he said that he changed lamb supplier five weeks ago (the same time my daughter's asthma commenced) as our local abattoir closed down, and this is complicated by the drought as the butcher will only buy large carcasses and these are not always available in the drought.

I have located another butcher who tells me his lamb is at local saleyards on Wednesday, slaughtered Thursday and they get delivery late Friday. My daughter is better today after nearly a week off lamb and hasn't required Ventolin for the first time in five weeks. I worry as to how new failsafers would pick up things like their meat not being entirely fresh as it appears harder and harder to get. The safest butchers appear to be the 'one man' butcher i.e. small business operator who runs the old fashioned butcher shop. I have found failsafe eating harder and harder to achieve and I am experienced with the diet. This makes me very sad as I know it is the answer, just hard to achieve! – Susan, NSW

[452] One liners 2 (August 2006)

I let my 7 year old eat as many dried apricots as he wanted for the sulphites challenge because he's definitely not salicylate sensitive - he ate 10 (little) whole apricots yesterday and said it was a bit hard to breathe even though he has no known asthma problem.

[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.

[413] Relentless dry cough - I was unaware of the food-asthma connection (May 2006)

Ever since my son - now aged 10 - was a baby he would get a persistent dry cough that would continue relentlessly throughout the day and all through the night of only the winter months every year - at least 6 months every year without fail. The doctors would all say that they couldn't hear wheezing, so stopped short of diagnosing asthma no matter how sick he was. Finally a new local doctor a few years ago suggested asthma and asked me to try a blue puffer with ventolin. It fixed him immediately after 5 months of relentless coughing! He is an extremely active, sporty child, who plays and trains hard every season, but never got the asthma in the summer months.

Ventolin continued to control it, although he was worse after soccer training and games - in recent years accompanied by acute chest pains during games - and often had to come off. Last year, he participated in a school cross country held in May and got into the next level (extremely hilly) in June. After the race he could not stop coughing, had difficulty breathing and was very ill, missing school for some time after, which was when we started to make the exercise connection. We then started to observe and realised the trigger was exercise. Once winter was over he was well again, right up until March this year.

The beginning of March coincided with my reading your books - for other problems, I had forgotten about the asthma as it was controlled with ventolin and seasonal - and the gradual reduction in non failsafe foods in our house in the lead up to going failsafe. During this time he participated in the soccer training and school cross country practices and came first twice - no coughing, no problems. About 90 per cent failsafe, he went to a two day school camp this year – we don't know what he ate. The next day (Saturday) at soccer he had severe chest pains throughout the game.

After the game his father bought him a sausage sandwich. He started coughing sometime that afternoon and continued for several days. On the Monday and Tuesday at school he came last in the cross country practices on both days, and came home extremely ill on the Tuesday, still coughing continuously. He stayed at home on the Wednesday with ventolin and the vaporizer and gradually recovered.

He was still coughing a little but much better the following Sunday, when we were unavoidably delayed whilst out. The kids were starving at lunchtime and begging for hot chips. At this point I was

not aware of the food-asthma connection nor of the sulphites in hot chips. Later that afternoon he quickly began to get much worse again and needed the puffer and vaporiser again on the Sunday and Monday night. By the Tuesday night he didn't need the puffer or vaporiser anymore and went to soccer training on the Wednesday night without coughing or chest pains. He has eaten 100 per cent failsafe since then (4 weeks later) with absolutely no sign of the asthma cough despite plenty of exercise and sport. He actually won his school cross country - no reactions at all afterwards or during, whilst plenty of kids were, in his words, "dropping like flies with asthma attacks all around him" - some quite seriously so! Of course, as usual, the school had a sausage sizzle going all that day to raise money - bizarre isn't it?

I wrote a record of this for myself to help me work out cause and effect, as I gradually started to realise the connection after I had gone over everything else they had eaten during that time - which was all failsafe. The camp food, sausage and hot chips were the only things not failsafe, and his coughing reactions began within a couple of hours of consumption. I am extremely grateful to you and your books for having made him almost failsafe at the time, to enable me to so clearly observe cause and effect with the food and the exercise – reader, NSW.

[409] One-liners (March 2006)

- My 5 yo son's asthma is triggered by MSG as well as artificial colours, preservatives and flavours. If he is given a handful of lollies containing artificial colours he is usually wheezing by bedtime. Every evening I test his peak flow. When he is well he consistently presents a reading of 110. Last week when I knew he had been given some lollies (grrr) I tested his peak flow only to find it was around 60.

[404] 210: Cough and asthma from benzoates in cough medication (March 2006)

Since the age of two I have seen a pattern develop in my daughter Jaslyn whereby she gets a cough every time she gets a cold. If I treat her with cough medicine the cough persists and becomes chronic, sometimes lasting weeks and causing great distress. In the worst episode two years ago she developed a serous asthma type wheeze with obvious distress and difficulty breathing after drinking soft drink – which she rarely has – and taking cough medicine.

Since then we have discovered that her symptoms and cough are greatly lessened if we do nothing when she has a cold and let it take its course. What we have found for the past two winters is that now if she gets a cold she will get a cough but it will last only for one or two nights if we do not give her any cough medicine. We have a strong family history of allergies and asthma and although I was aware of avoiding sulfites and preservatives in her food I was not aware of the use of benzoates in medicines. I realise now that the benzoate preservatives in cold medicines exacerbate my daughter's symptoms and turn her persistent cough into difficulty in breathing and asthma like symptoms. – Julie Eady

[402] Changing diet has done more than giving away the cigarettes for breathing problem (March 2006)

I exchanged a few emails with you early last year in regards to a breathing problem I've had since my early teens (I'm 41 now) and thanks to your information on how to watch out for certain foods my life is MUCH improved. I have been weight training since my late teens and have picked up quite a bit of knowledge on nutrition along the way but looking deeper into foods containing preservatives, sulphites etc has opened my eyes to a whole different side of eating. As an ex-smoker I always put my problem down to that but limiting my intake of mince meat, prawns, pizza, processed meats etc. to a very small percentage of my diet has done more for me than giving away the cigarettes. –
Richie, Vic

[375] Sick and tired (July 2005)

I purchased your book earlier this year as I was well and truly sick of asthma and many other health problems like period problems, chronic sinus and hayfever, varied stomach problems and lethargy. I found out that I am intolerant to gluten, salicylates, amines, preservatives and some other additives. I want to thank you so much for your book - it has changed my life. I am not fully better but I can now breathe and have so much energy, no stomach troubles, minimal hayfever and I haven't been sick since I started the diet. I just wish doctors would tell their patients about trying different diets to help asthma - I could have done with knowing years ago! – Rosemaree, by email

[373] No significant asthma in 10 months (July 2005)

I bought a copy of "Fed Up With Asthma" about 10 months ago. Since then I have been avoiding the food additives highlighted on your card and have had no significant asthma.

Your argument seems to fit in perfectly with my history. I grew up in England and developed mild asthma as an adult. This was generally triggered by cats, house dust or overexertion. I moved to New Zealand, where my asthma got much worse. My doctor told me that this was due to the cold, damp Wellington climate.

I moved to Belgium in 2000. Despite living in a colder and damper climate I had no asthma in Belgium. During this time I drank very little wine, preferring the traditional local beers. I also consumed far fewer food additives just by being there. For example bread lasts less than a day as the bakers are fiercely traditional in their methods. The same is true of most other food providers.

On returning to New Zealand in 2004, the asthma started to return. This was despite living in sunny Nelson. I knew that it must have been caused by something regional. Your book helped me to identify the problem as bad food additives.

This afternoon I was shocked to hear an expert on asthma and allergies on Radio New Zealand reiterating the old message about kids not eating enough dirt. I must have eaten loads as a kid. When I called in he insisted that there was no link to food additives, except perhaps sulphite in wine as a trigger. There is obviously still some way to go. Please keep up the good work! - by email from NZ

[370] 210: Asthma and benzoates in medication (July 2005)

After hearing about sodium benzoate in asthma medication at your presentation recently I was a bit shocked, and sure enough it was there in my son's medication - standard Ventolin Sugar Free Oral

Liquid used for under fives. I talked to my GP about my son's asthma and that the preservative that can cause asthma was in the medication and he was extremely shocked.

My son had suddenly developed asthma when he was two months old, just after his first immunisation shot - although at that age they don't call it asthma. When the asthma finally went away we got the second shot. After that he frequently stopped breathing and was on so much medication we took turns at sitting up with him through the night. Finally we decided that the medication wasn't working constantly enough and took him off it without telling the doctor – and our son slowly got better. He would still have small attacks on occasions so after my husband read your book he decided we should try diet. We noticed there was a difference when we found some sultanas that didn't contain sulphites. We were doing great and had almost six months free of any medication then last week our son developed an ear infection and was put on Amoxil antibiotics and Panadol for pain, both containing sodium benzoate. Within three days he had an asthma episode. After much enquiry I have found that sodium benzoate is in almost every single baby medication including pain medication (often along with artificial colours and flavours. Our pharmacist said that the small amount of sodium benzoate couldn't possibly create a reaction like asthma, it's unheard of, and as sodium benzoate is so effective as a preservative it is the most commonly used preservative in medication today and likely to be in the future. God help us!! – mother from Qld.

[See the article Asthma worsened by benzoate contained in some antiasthmatic drugs, by Balatsinou L and others, Int J Immunopathol Pharmacol, 2004 ;17(2):225-6: "Drug and food additives are known to induce pseudo-allergic reactions such as urticaria, eczema, asthma and rhinitis. These reactions are often under-diagnosed, above all in allergic patients treated with additive containing drugs. On the contrary, attention to the additives present in some drug formulations and foods may often permit more correct diagnosis."]

[368] One liners (March 2005)

Until I read your excellent book Fed Up with Asthma I had no idea food additives could trigger asthma, even as a sufferer all my life. The guidance of my invaluable local GP and your exceptional book have helped me to bring my asthma under control. – by email When we went to see a paediatrician 18 months ago she wanted to give us two types of drugs for both kids. If she had mentioned diet I wouldn't have been calling you people with such desperation now. – by email

[361] Asthma and Alpha-1 Antitrypsin Deficiency (March 2005)

I got asthma for the first time four years ago. At that time, I didn't know what was happening and it took me about two hours to breathe properly again. After my second asthma attack I went to the doctor and my peakflow reading was only 160 - anything under 200, you should be in hospital. I spent about \$3000 trying to find out what was wrong. I went to ear, nose and throat specialists, respiratory specialists etc. Finally I got the diagnosis of asthma, chronic allergic rhinosinusitis and I found out later by a blood test that I had alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency (A1AD) – a genetic enzyme deficiency that can cause lung disease.

I have your books Fed Up, Fed Up with Asthma and the Failsafe Cookbook - all brilliant!!!! And I I have not been sick since I started the elimination diet. The only doctors' visits I have needed have

been to get approval to reduce the medication. When I first developed asthma, I was put on a preventer which I took 4 times a day. Later they put me on a stronger preventer (Symbicort 200/6 turbobaler). After the diet, when I cut down my preventer medication to half (2 puffs a day) my peakflow readings never went below 400. When I had a peakflow reading of 500, I decided to reduce it again with the approval of my doctor. I felt so good the next day I decided not to take the preventer medication at night, I now only take the 1 puff of preventer in the morning.

Through the diet, I have found that I react to all the food you say sensitive people might react to: MSG, nitrates, salicylates, amines, colours, preservatives and dairy foods, although MSG is the worst. I do gluten free, egg free baking because I found out my 5 year old is dairy/gluten intolerant and my 6 year old reacts to eggs - they are affected by everything else like me and my 7 year old is also affected by antioxidants. I am also intolerant to chemicals and had very bad side effects from the contraceptive pill. I hope that other people will achieve the results I have as it has made a huge change in my life, and as a bonus, I have lost 15 kg! – Tracy Grove, NZ

[338] ONE LINERS (July 2004)

* We gave up 282 preservatives in bread after reading your book 'Fed up' about two years ago – within a week my wife was free of urinary incontinence and over a period of about three months I was able to give up all asthma medications. – readers aged 60 and 56

* I have been asthmatic for 34 years and in the first 20 pages of your asthma book I learnt so much.

* I never knew mince could contain sulphites until I read your asthma book and then I realized why my asthma got bad the week we lived on our butcher's cut-price mince.

[326] Amines in supermarket meats (April 2004)

Even though my asthmatic daughter Kate improved out of sight on the failsafe diet, she never got the fabulous results that other failsafers report, and I always wondered why.

Up until November last year, Kate's peak flow was around 280-300 and although she never needed Ventolin, we couldn't get her off inhaled steroids. Suddenly in November her peak flow shot up to 380-395 consistently and we were about to take her off her Pulmicort. Then after two months she slumped back to a peak flow of 250 and needing Ventolin. Nothing had changed in her diet.

A light bulb moment occurred when I realised that I had been buying our meat from Coles or Woolworths for years but last November I started buying local butcher's meat. I hadn't realised the connection that the butcher's meat was what brought Kate's peak flow up to the 380 range and when I returned to buying Coles meat even though fresh, it slumped down to 250. Why?

It turns out that what I thought was fresh meat from my local supermarket hasn't been fresh at all. Meat is sent to the Bathurst Woolworths and Coles stores not as carcasses, but in vacuum packs. When the vacuum pack is opened, the meat is repacked in trays and sold as fresh meat to the consumer with a use by date 3-5 days from the opening of the cryovac pack. This lasts the supermarket up to 8 weeks so the meat can be up to 60 days old in the vacuum pack before it is

opened and sold as fresh meat. By comparison, my local butcher reassures me that his meat is killed on Thursday/Friday and he gets it Monday. I purchase on that Monday for the week and freeze.

I found on the internet that vacuum packaging of meat is not an effective means of retarding the production of amines, and we know that Kate is a sensitive amine responder.

Kate has now been off Coles meat for five days. Her peak flow has risen from 250 to 330 already and she no longer requires Ventolin - so this was obviously the cause of her asthma. This was the hardest food item ever to figure out. I am usually pretty good at finding it but this one had me baffled until I realised the meat connection. It was only because there was a pattern to the asthma. Kate woke up every Monday morning needing Ventolin and the only thing different about Sunday was the roast lamb for dinner!

Coles Customer relations say that this is a fairly new procedure, but some stores have been doing it longer than others. Some Woolworths stores vacuum pack only beef not lamb, but Coles supermarkets vacuum pack both lamb and beef. This may change from supermarket to supermarket. I know that this is my problem and will be a problem for a lot of amine responders. Chicken is not affected, as it is usually 48 hour from slaughter to sale. After my sleepless nights and desperation to track down this offending amine, I hope now to get the word out to other amine responders which I know you will do on your website. - Susan Bragg, NSW.

[323] Dodgy doctors and salicylates (April 2004)

I've kept my 12 year old's asthma at bay for most of his life with dust mite control, no additives etc. Since the Christmas holidays started he's had a virus and then constant asthma. I visited a doctor two weeks ago and he put my son on a wheat free, dairy free, additive free diet (all of which I've done before) as well as salicylate free diet for which he gave me a list of good and bad foods. He also recommended steaming eucalyptus twice a day for mucus control as well as some supplements.

After 10 days there had been no improvement so I sat down and reread your book as well as Friendly Food from RPAH. I found his list had been quite misleading - no talk about cold pressed oils, different rices, raw and roasted cashews, hazelnuts, tamari, additives in margarines etc.

Probably the worst thing has been the twice daily sucking in of eucalyptus oil!! There must be a lot of doctors out there like this who send people off with half-baked lists and advice and consequently end up with very spurious results. Most of the population treat doctors as gods and never question them but, as I have proven on many occasions, they are not infallible and people need to be a lot more aware and questioning. It is has been hard yakka trying to get my son to give up so many different foods and all for nought as now we will need to find somebody who really knows what they are doing and start again.

Had I not had your book, we could have come to the conclusion that the problem is not salicylates, whereas there is a possibility that it is. - by email.

[311] Sleep and behaviour problems due to asthma medication (December 2003)

I was lucky enough to see you speak in Launceston in September. My husband and I have been at a loss regarding our three-year-old son's frequent nosebleeds, lack of sleep, temper outbursts and all of the other problems associated with a 'normal' toddler's wellbeing. When reading in depth Fed Up With Asthma we now realise this was probably caused by Singulair Tablets. When our new doctor took him off these he sleeps!!!! and a lot of the other symptoms have subsided. We have an appointment with a failsafe dietitian next month and have been failsafing the pantry over the last 6 weeks. The temper tantrums have been halved with the severity at least a quarter of what they used to be. Thank you for being the one person to listen to a mother in need. - Toni, Tas

[310] Asthma 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. - failsafer, Qld

[309] Adult with asthma (December 2003)

I am an adult with asthma. I went off milk and sulphite preservatives about 6 months ago, I have not had asthma since (unless I am 'naughty' and have some sulphite). - Elizabeth, ACT

[308] Asthma bouts improving (December 2003)

Just reporting in on our 3-year-old - we seem to have got through an attack of asthma without prednisolone. What a break-through! We had another good night's sleep - so rare during asthma bouts in the past, and there is a definite improvement on yesterday. Normally his escalating asthma never turns around without corticosteroids. I guess it is early days yet but I am really getting faith in the possibility of sulphite preservatives aggravating the sensitive airways and adding to the other irritations (virus, allergens, irritating particles) to create asthma. It is great to think that we can have some control over one of the components and lessen the health aggravation. - member of the failsafe3 email group

[307] Asthma in elite athletes (2) (December 2003)

I read the story on your website about the soccer player who was eating lots of muesli bars and developed exercise asthma. The same thing happened to my daughter. We thought she had outgrown her asthma but it came back when she started eating muesli bars recommended by her swimming coach. Her asthma got so bad she had to give up swimming with the squad. - Reader, by email

[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

[305] Asthma - a dietitian's progress (December 2003)

Just updating you on my progress - before starting the elimination diet for my asthma, I was on 500mg of Seretide accuhaler morning and night, I dropped to 250 and was fine so I tried to go off it completely. After a day and a half I was wheezy and tight in my chest so I tried the 100mg dose and have maintained that - which means that I have dropped my asthma medication by 80% on the elimination diet. So far I have passed both the milk and salicylate challenges.

By the way, this has been a great professional development activity that I think will really benefit my future clients. - Dietitian, SA

[289] The Clayton's diet ... the speech therapist was so amazed (September 2003)

A friend of a friend with two young children visited a dietitian who put them on what I can only describe as a Clayton's failsafe diet ... not quite fully failsafe. For example, the dietitian told her that it was perfectly ok for her children to eat McDonalds/Red Rooster chips...

She was introduced to my wife and got into a conversation about real failsafe diets. After 4 days on the real diet, she rang my wife crying with happiness. Her son had settled down to what she considered a 'normal child' to be. His aggression was gone, his tendencies to distraction had disappeared and his sleep had increased by two hours a night. In his first speech therapy session since starting on the real diet, he suddenly managed to recognise 40 words (from picture cards) as well as all primary and secondary colours, where his previous best attempt at word recognition was 8 words. The speech therapist was so amazed that she has already started researching failsafe dieting. The dietitian who put her on the Clayton's diet has now started looking seriously at the failsafe diet instead. It's been two weeks now and our friend is seeing the pediatrician who put her son on Ritalin this week to see about getting him off it completely. She's 100% sure that he doesn't need it at all any more. And remember the sister? She was a chronic asthmatic, but she hasn't needed a puffer since a few days after starting the diet. - from an email discussion group, with permission

[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

[275] Asthma (June 2003)

I am writing to thank you for all the help your book 'Fed up with Asthma' has given my family. My daughter is two and a half years old, and was diagnosed with asthma when she was 10 months old. She was hospitalized with croup and later we were told she has asthma. She was put on a steroid puffer and I was told she would need this for most of her childhood.

I knew that food additives were not safe and I tried not to buy anything with 'numbers' on the back of the packs, which proved to be difficult. Still this didn't seem to help, I also put her on goats milk and took her off all other dairy products.

I took her to an asthma pediatrician, three months ago. He gave her an allergy skin prick test which came back totally negative. She was allergic to nothing! The doctor assumed that food was not a cause of her asthma. I was told that the cold winter nights were triggering her asthma, to go home and put her back on her steroid puffer.

This winter she seemed to get worse. As the cold nights set in, her coughing increased to the point that I was up every 20 minutes comforting her. I was desperately trying to keep her off the steroid puffer and I was about to give in, when I saw your book.

My daughter has now been on the failsafe diet for three weeks with amazing results. By the end of the first day she coughed only once, same the second day and the next two days nothing.

I've only made one mistake, when I gave her crackers which probably contained BHA (320) as a preservative in oil. At the time I thought they were failsafe so my daughter had quite a lot as a snack. That night she was back to coughing every two minutes and using her ventolin puffer. After 24 hours she was okay again and back on the failsafe diet.

I realise that we still need to discover other sensitivities but for now she can breath easy with no barking cough and we can both have a good nights sleep. If it hadn't been for your dedication to this cause I don't where we would be today. Thank you. - Joanne, Perth Western Australia

[261] Unlabelled sulphites in paracetamol (June 2003)

I have done some investigating and was horrified to find that the brand of paracetamol at the hospital that I work at, Febridol, has sulphite preservative in it. This could be a problem for asthmatics admitted to the hospital! Many other brands I looked at also contained sorbates and benzoates as preservatives. Herron tablets are colour free, gluten free and preservative free (see product updates.) - from the failsafe group

[251] Unlisted sulphites (April 2003)

I am the mother of an eleven year old asthmatic whose asthma is very well-controlled by avoiding certain food products. I have been caught unawares twice this month with flours containing sulphur dioxide. Both times the sulphur dioxide was not listed on the packet as it was under the necessary dosage to be listed, but within 12 hours of ingesting the product, my very well controlled asthmatic daughter started to wheeze and needed medication. Both times I rang the company who assured me the product did not contain sulphites, but when I pushed the company for more information it was revealed that in the processing, sulphites are added at the flour processing stage. Both times the products were labelled as 100% pure products.

This ingredient SHOULD BE LISTED, no matter how much is contained in the product. My daughter is obviously very sensitive. Traces of peanuts, eggs and dairy are now listed on food packages due to anaphylactic reactions of some children, why not for sulphur dioxide when it can also cause life threatening reactions? - Susan, NSW

[250] "Best information regarding asthma" (April 2003)

My second daughter (aged 7½), has always been the most 'difficult' one of my three children. Over the years we have had to put up with regular tantrums, defiance, rudeness and out of proportion reactions when things didn't go her own way. She also often complained of tummy aches and had little energy.

In early 2002 I read Sue Dengate's book 'Fed Up'. What I read described my daughter exactly. I discovered there is a name for her behaviour - oppositional defiance - and that it can be caused by intolerance to artificial or natural food chemicals. Our family decided to do an elimination diet using 'The Failsafe Cookbook' for guidance. We discovered that our daughter reacts severely to certain

food colours and preservatives found in some breads and other food products. She also has an intolerance to natural food chemicals called salicylates.

The change in our diet has been enough to make a huge difference in our daughter's behaviour. She is now a happy, co-operative member of our family. She has a lot more energy and no longer overreacts when things don't go her way.

Asthma has also been a problem in our family. "Fed Up with Asthma" has given me the best information regarding asthma triggers and medications that I have ever read. Amazingly, in the six months since that we have been eating failsafe foods, no one in our family has suffered an asthma attack. - Alice, NT

[249] From an asthmatic failsafer (April 2003)

Great News!! I have just finished week two of the elimination part of the diet and have found that I have gone from using my Ventolin at least once a day to not at all. I am still taking my preventative medicine tho and I still carry my Ventolin with me wherever I go. I have dined out a couple of times with friends but I have researched and am equipped for any situation! I love natural oysters so that is what I eat when I dine out with friends!! (with G&Ts). I am really looking forward to finding out which foods affect my asthma. - reader NT (so far, the salicylate and amine challenges have not affected her asthma, we'll keep you posted)

[248] Mature onset asthma (April 2003)

My mother has "mature onset" asthma. We know she is super sensitive to sulphur in medications etc. but she remains in denial about changing her diet. - by email

[228] Severe Aspirin Induced Asthma (January 2003)

'I have Samter's Triad syndrome, also known as Aspirin Induced Asthma (AIA). About 10 per cent of people with Samter's syndrome also get urticaria (hives) and/or angioedema (swelling of the lips, tongue, neck etc). Angioedema can be so severe as to cause death by suffocation, so it is considered a medical emergency.

'Samter's syndrome may be acquired at any time of life although it mainly affects women who are in their 40s and starting menopause. When I was 15, I was given hormones for some female problems and within a week was deathly ill with constant coughing, wheeze, whole body swelling and hives. As my lungs were always filled with liquid they called it 'wet asthma'. It took years to figure out what was wrong with me but when they did, they concluded that the hormones threw me into this by changing my body chemistry.

'I found out that I was allergic to aspirin from an anaphylactic reaction when I was 16. I did not require hospitalization but I was very ill for over a week. My mouth, face and eyes and lips all swelled inside out and I had asthma and hives. For the next 3 years, it was a constant life and death situation, being transported to the hospital too many times to count, unconscious and in respiratory failure. No one, not even the doctors knew what causing the problems as the asthma was so very

different from common asthma. During that time, I was put on prednisone on an every other day schedule and had to quit school as the illness was completely out of control.

'When I was 18, I went into anaphylactic shock when I was given the wrong pain medicine (Darvon - containing aspirin) by accident. I took one pill and within 15 minutes was unconscious. I was in intensive care for a week, then in the respiratory wing for another week. During that time, I was given a gingerale soda and went into another anaphylactic reaction. That is when they figured out I was sensitive to salicylates in foods and yellow #5 dye and was diagnosed with what they called Triad Asthma back then.

'Since that time I have tried just about every low salicylate diet that the doctors or I could find. I know now they were not complete nor correct. I was ingesting many foods like broccoli, cauliflower and onions on a daily basis, under the impression that they were safe. I had what they called mini-anaphylactic reactions nearly every day and was put on prednisone, asthma medication and an antihistamine on a daily schedule to control reactions. Salicylates kept building up in my system until the daily prednisone wasn't stopping the reactions and I would end up in the hospital again.

'Looking back to when I first was diagnosed with this and after the anaphylactic shock, I was eating a little rice, very few vegetables, no fruits and mostly meat and drinking only water. I was too scared to eat much. That was the first time I was able to come off prednisone for any length of time at all. Then the dietitian said I was anemic and wanted me to vary my diet. So I started eating more fruit and vegetables. It wasn't very long till I was back on all the medications. I didn't connect that the foods I had added back in were the problem because they were listed as low salicylate on the list that I was given.

'For the last 29 years, it has been up and down, just trying to figure it all out, taking medications and trying to stay alive. I would rack my brains trying to figure out where I was going wrong but couldn't get a handle on it. And was having to take more and more prednisone and antihistamines.

'When I found the Australian salicylate lists I was so excited. I could finally understand what was happening. I was inadvertently eating salicylates every day.' - from the USA

[227] "His asthma is non allergic " (January 2003)

My son (now nearly 4) was born early. He had lung problems which have led to recurring respiratory problems. We tried every kind of baby formula and ended up on soy formula. At nine months he had grommets in and adenoids out because of chronic glue ear. At eighteen months he had his tonsils out, at the time he was on three different types of antibiotics to keep him well enough to have the operation. His asthma is non allergic. This year he has done very well. Up until last week he had a clear run with only one lot of antibiotics up to date, and no asthma. I think that my problems started three weeks ago when I took my son off soy milk, because I heard that the oestrogens might have an effect on my boy.

To actually get him to drink cows milk I had to buy skimmed and put malted milk powder in it. It has taken three weeks for my son to turn into a monster and he has just had a dreadful week with his asthma - the first bout this year. Everybody else keeps telling me now he is a 'normal' boy. Two of

my friends tell me that my son's behaviour is equal to that of their children and that is what they put up with all the time, and worse. I know they do. But I don't want to, and I have seen my son as a before and after. I want my old son back. Can you please tell me if there is any evidence that soy milk is so very damning, and detrimental to the health? Or perhaps point me in the right direction to find out more. Or suggest another alternative.

[For a scientific look at the effects of soymilk, see the link on my website to the Harvard Women's Health Centre. You will have to make up your own mind. Ricemilk is an alternative to cows milk and soymilk. It is best to buy calcium fortified if you can find it, or take a calcium supplement - you can ask your dietitian about nutrition.]

[224] "After four weeks, he was able to go without medication altogether" (October 2002)

It's been 7 weeks now since we switched to Brumby's bread. Within days, my 10 year old ADHD son started improving and we halved his dose of dexamphetamine medication. After four weeks on preservative free bread, he was able to go without medication altogether.

You've no idea how much this child has changed. It's huge. I no longer get calls from school, he's bringing home merit awards, he entered himself in a maths competition, studied for it and won the first round . He does his homework without being asked. Half the time he goes to bed and is sound asleep before we say anything. Before, we used to get excited if he got to sleep by 11 pm. One day we were late for school and he said "that's OK, if we're late, we're late". Before, he would scream at me and kick the door. The change is unbelievable.

My older son has changed too. He is a very calm and loving child but he used to be so forgetful - like he was in another world. He would get very frustrated at forgetting things and sometimes he would snap. Now he remembers everything the first time.

We've seen improvements in the whole family - all five of us - except for the last two weeks, when we on holidays and we couldn't get Brumby's bread. We bought a bread labelled "no preservatives" but we all got worse. Then someone told me about whey powder. When I checked the label, it had whey powder in it.

My husband and I have noticed we have so much more energy and are less moody on preservative-free bread. With 282, I'm so tired all the time, I can't hold a conversation without losing people, my handwriting is terrible, I write some of my letters backwards, and I've even reversed phone numbers (02 instead of 20). This is really important in my job.

Three of us (me and two of the kids) are asthmatics. On the Brumbys bread we've all been asthma free and medication free for 3 weeks. That's a long time for us.

I'm angry. They think because they put a number on the label, they can put anything they like in our food. But we don't know what it is or what it can do to us. I don't want my child medicated if there's another way. - Anne-Marie, Hunter Valley, NSW

[126] Joe was "broken" from the time he was born (September 2001)

Julie is a police prosecutor and a mother of nearly 4 children. When she saw what food did to her three year old son, she became an enthusiastic supporter of failsafe and a co-founder of the new Brisbane food intolerance support group.

Joseph gets up from his afternoon tea and goes and whispers to his father Steve. He wants to know if it's okay to eat the marshmallows in his bowl. He's four and he probably can't pronounce food intolerance but he knows how bad it makes him feel if he eats things he shouldn't. His mother Julie says if they hadn't found out what was wrong with Joseph when they did he would probably be in jail for murder now.

She says Joe was "broken" from the time he was born and it wasn't until he was diagnosed with food intolerance at three and a half that a solution seemed possible for the little boy. As well as being a mother of three and pregnant with number four, Julie is also a part-time Police Sergeant working as police prosecutor in Court 1 in Brisbane.

She's so concerned about the link between behaviour and food intolerance that she's undertaking independent study on the food effects on juvenile criminality as part of her Masters Degree in Justice/Law at QUT. Steve isn't sure that food turns kids into criminals but he does know what food can do to his son.

"He was like a bear with a sore head - that's how he was. He was aggressive to other kids and defiant to adults. Now he's responsive, his speech has improved, and his concentration span has improved.

"He can sit down and watch something on TV. He can sit down and do a puzzle or colour in."

Joseph's problem lies primarily with food colours and flavouring and reactions range from aggression to asthma. With careful shopping and label reading Joseph can enjoy and happy and normal life without too much imposition on the rest of the family.

There have been slip-ups on the way. The family dyed eggs for Easter not realising that Joseph's sensitivity would extend to touch. Joseph blames his mum for that asthma attack. The solution for Joseph came when a paediatrician suggested that Julie might like to read a book called "Fed Up" by Sue Dengate. She consulted a dietitian and put Joseph on an elimination diet. His life changed.

Julie is urging people who suspect food might affecting their children's behaviour to attend a presentation by Sue Dengate ... - Julie's story (above) appeared on page 3 of the September edition of "Kids in Brisbane", resulting in a capacity crowd of nearly 200 for my presentation at Zillmere PCYC.

[113] Rash, asthma from colour 122(August 2001)

I have a 4 year old granddaughter who has a number of food intolerances and a 6 year old granddaughter who is just starting to show the cumulative effects of 122 [artificial red colour] with rash around mouth, also some asthma symptoms that she has never had before. I would like to receive your newsletter not only to assist me when I have them in my care, but also because I think we could all do without the "garbage" that is added to much of our processed food. - by email

[100] Ginny's story 26 years on, the full story (August 2001)

Ginny was my second child. Her older sister had been a model baby, always smiling, rarely cried but she developed chronic asthma at age 8 months and required frequent hospitalisation. She was 2 ½ when Ginny was born.

From day one Ginny was a very unsettled baby, didn't sleep much and cried a lot. At 2 months of age I had to physically keep her awake between 6pm and 10pm so that I could feed her, put her to bed and (hopefully) get 3 hours straight sleep. By 4 months of age she had developed chronic eczema on her face, scalp, neck and creases of arms and legs.

By 12 months of age she had major ulceration on her bottom and an allergy specialist suggest we try soy milk as it could be a cows milk problem. At that time I had to get the soy milk through the chemist on prescription and it didn't really make a huge amount of difference. We tried the soy milk for 6 months and then went back to cows milk. She was getting more and more restless and would sleep for 1 hour and then wake up screaming. When Ginny was 14 months old I had child number 3. Gareth was the most placid, easy going little boy you could ever imagine. Sardi (the oldest) was still having major asthma attacks and hospitalisation. Ginny was still waking every hour on the hour - this went on day after day, night after night, month after month. Gareth developed croup and would have really bad nights where I would be up with him for hours with the steam running in the bathroom.

By the time Ginny was 2 years old, when she wasn't screaming through the night she was getting into mischief through the day or throwing dreadful tantrums because she couldn't get her own way. Climbing in dangerous places, falling up, through, on or off anything there was in sight to climb on.

A sixth sense woke me early one morning and I went into the kitchen to find her sitting on top of the oven. It was one of those stoves which had the oven and hotplates side by side with the controls for the electric hotplates at the back. She had climbed on to the hotplates and then up on the oven and had reached over and turned on all the hotplates. When I got there she was sitting looking at them glowing red and just laughed at me and said "look at the pretty colours, mummy".

She still woke every hour throughout the night and the only thing I could do to get her back to sleep was to give her a bottle which was usually filled with cordial, as the doctors told me not to give her too much milk and if I used too much fruit juice I had the nappies to contend with!

During our frequent trips to the doctor Ginny was always an angel. When I asked if it could be something she was eating, they just laughed at me and the doctor told me that I was overanxious. I came close to having a breakdown. When I wanted to get another opinion I was sent to the hospital. They wanted to put me in hospital to calm down. When I said "no", they asked me would I like them to put her in hospital to give me a break.

They said that she was just a naughty girl and to just let her scream as "she would stop sooner or later" and that she only screamed because I went into see her. Not very easy to do when she screams for 3 hours in the middle of the night and dad has to go to work the next day and the other

two are awake and crying.. The doctors then decided to try Ginny on Vallergan to "quieten her down" because they believed she was just boisterous and I just was not coping with motherhood.

At age 2 ½ I was at the end of my tether and one day I picked her up and held her against the wall and started to shake her and bang her against the wall. I had tears running down my face and thank god something inside me said to me to put her down or I was going to do some dreadful damage.

About 2 months after this I read an article in a magazine which was talking about Dr Ben Feingold's book "Why your child is Hyperactive". It talked about the relationship of food colours and preservatives and children's behaviour. The article gave a list of about 14 symptoms and said that if you could answer 'yes' to any 6 of them, there was a darn good chance that food colours were playing a major part in the child's behaviour. We answered "yes" to 12 of the 14. The book was unavailable in Australia at that time and I had one of the City bookstores order a copy for me.

I read the book and then went to discuss it with my doctor and was told it was a lot of "maybe" and that nothing was proven. I discussed it with my brother (also a doctor) who told me that kids were being unnecessarily labelled hyperactive and it was predominantly a discipline problem. I tried to discuss it with others who just didn't want to know.

We still had Sardi going in and out of hospital with asthma and Gareth up through the night with bouts of croup. Their father was working late into the evenings (I think so that he didn't have to come home to the chaos) and by this stage our marriage was starting to collapse.

My husband and I discussed the diet recommended in the book and decided that it couldn't do any harm as things couldn't be much worse. The only problem was that the book was written in the USA and the diet was designed for the American market, so many of the products were not available here. I took the book one day and started to go through the pantry cupboard. I checked every label on everything in the pantry and filled 2 garbage bags with food. I went to the supermarket and read the labels on everything I bought. What I wasn't sure about I telephoned the manufacturers and asked them what the products contained. We started from scratch. I made everything we ate from scratch, bread, cakes, biscuits, ice-cream, icy poles etc. etc. We all ate the same food.

After 1 week, Ginny had started sleeping for 2-3 hour stretches.

After 2 weeks, she had stopped throwing tantrums

After 3 weeks, she was sleeping right through the night

After 4 weeks I had, for the first time, a normal child in the house.

After 3 months, her eczema had just about totally cleared.

"Coincidentally" (or not) her older sister's asthma had, by this stage, lessened to the stage where she no longer required frequent trips to hospital and was manageable to home and her brothers bouts of croup had stopped.

What really annoyed me was that about 4-5 years later the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne had adapted the diet and were using it as breakthrough treatment for behavioural problems.

As Ginny was able to communicate better and someone (usually a well meaning grandma!) would give her something nice like a red icy pole (and then send her home to me!) she would tell me that she had a "big head". As she got older, she later explained that when she had something off limits, her head felt as though it was going to explode.

Ginny is now 27 and has a 9 month old daughter. She still checks labels and she does all her own baking and cooking and rarely uses pre-packaged goods (although I noticed that the ones she tends to use are the same products I used when I changed our diet all those years ago) I have every confidence that her little girl will not have to go through the hell her mother went through. Even now, as her poor partner found out the hard way, she still reacts badly to Cherry Ripes! He would bring them home and she would occasionally eat them. Until one day when she had too many. He's now banned them from the house.

My message to everyone out there : I wish I'd had the benefit of Sue's book 25 years ago. Diet really does work. Hang in there - it gets better and better - Rosemary (Silly Yaks Bakery Café, Melbourne)

[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

[012] Can a vegetable garden really be so bad? Read the two-part story from this family of five (May 1999)

Part 1

We are finding it difficult to start on the diet properly. Our vegetable garden at the moment is rewarding us for months of hard work by producing large amounts of tomatoes, sweet corn, strawberries and silver beet, it is very hard to pass all these up.

However, when we eliminated all additives - which wasn't many as we have always tried to avoid these anyway - our three-year-old started sleeping through the night every night for the first time - after only two days without two glasses of cordial each day. People said he is just growing up, but when he had commercial bread two days in a row for lunch (we usually bake our own) he woke up in the night on those two days only.

My own experience has been really great. I have suffered from migraines which last for two days every week for years. After five weeks of no additives and no foods high in amines I had not had a single migraine and felt wonderful. Then last week a friend gave us some home cured and dried beef, I couldn't resist. Guess what, a migraine the next day. I am going back on the diet straightaway.

Our 13 year old daughter suffers from asthma and headaches and was becoming what we thought must be normal at her age (withdrawn and sullen). Now she is hooked on the diet. No asthma, no headaches - she feels great and her general attitude to life in general has improved. My husband

thought that sitting in front of a computer all day was giving him headaches every afternoon but has now made a connection between his headaches and chilli sauce on his sandwiches and the orange he was eating for lunch.

Our 11 year old son was actually the one we decided to do the diet for. He was extremely disruptive at school, could not concentrate or complete tasks and found it difficult to maintain friendships because he had a very volatile temper in the playground to the extent of injuring other children by throwing bricks, rocks and sticks. If he considered something was unfair he would destroy any cubby houses that the others had constructed. At other times he was a complete angel and couldn't do enough to help others. He is also the hardest one in the family to keep on the diet. He doesn't see his behaviour as his problem, it is always someone else's fault. He was going really well for a week or so then suddenly had an outburst one afternoon at school that his teacher, who is very understanding, could not account for. Later that night when he calmed down it came out that he had swapped sandwiches with a boy who had anchovies on his lunch.

Part 2 (two weeks later)

I've decided that I don't care how much our garden is producing after having two migraines following tomatoes for dinner one night and silver beet another. Both these left me feeling unwell and nauseous for 4 days.

This was also time for a breakthrough with our 11 year old son who also suffered from similar symptoms - as well as behavioural - for a few days after eating the silver beet. He is now aware that there is a connection with the food he eats.

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