



**Nutritional Strategies
for Adults Aging
with Autism**

Eden Autism presentation March 2019

The Nourishing Gurus LLC © 2019



ABOUT US...

The Nourishing Gurus



What we are going to cover

- ✔ 3 Critical Factors to Aging Well with Autism
- ✔ 3 Culprits that Interfere with Healthy Aging
- ✔ Our Guide to a Healthy Aging Diet

The Nourishing Gurus

Why Prioritize Nutrition when Addressing Aging and Autism

- ✔ Improve quality of life (mood, sleep, general behavior)
- ✔ Reduction of common ailments (reflux, constipation abdominal pain, sinus issues, eczema)
- ✔ Lessen need for medication
- ✔ Reduced risk of obesity and/or chronic disease



Aging and Autism

In a nutshell, aging healthfully with autism involves 3 critical factors...



1. HEALTHY CELLS!

Think about a cell and what it needs. The better it is fed, the better it works.

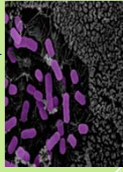
When given nutrients, vitamins and minerals, it functions more effectively and efficiently.

Healthy cells *take in nutrients and get rid of waste.*




2. A WELL-BALANCED MICROBIOME

- Microbiome – bacterial population that lives in your body - **10x** more bacteria than human cells!
- Gut brain - neurons in the gut
- Enteric nervous system - "mind of its own"
 - sends and receives impulses
 - respond to emotions
 - network of neurons, that enables it to act independently, learn, remember and, produce gut feelings



The Nourishing Gut

2. A WELL-BALANCED MICROBIOME (CONT.)

- Many recent clinical studies have shown that treatments that regulate the gut microbiota result in improvements in ASD symptoms
- Supports digestion, affects weight, heart health, blood sugar
- Immune system (70% in the gut), more immune cells in gut than the rest of the body

"All diseases begins in the gut"
~ Hippocrates

The Nourishing Gut

3. Balanced Blood Sugar


Imbalance of blood sugar can cause irritability, affect mood and attention span.

Chronically high blood sugar is a risk factor for not only diabetes but heart disease, bone loss, high blood pressure, arthritis and cognition/memory problems



The Nourishing Gut

Blood Sugar (cont.)

Insulin causes blood sugar to rise and dip




Think about how you are when you get hungry - what might show up as behavior can actually be blood sugar issues




Summing it Up

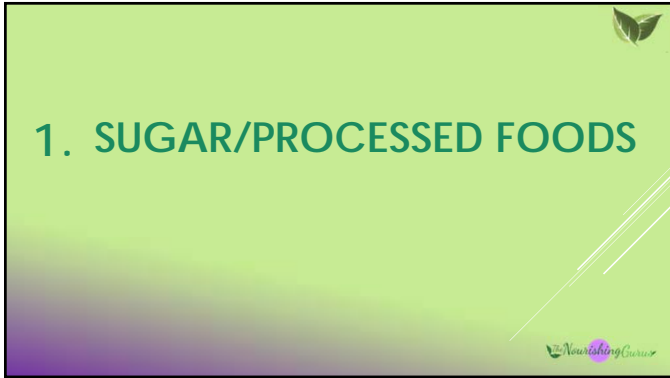
Healthy Cells/Microbiome/Blood sugar

- Helps strengthen immune system
- Improves digestive health
- Supports brain health
- Moderates behavior/mood
- Prevents chronic disease (cholesterol, blood pressure, obesity, cancer, etc)
- Improves sleep!

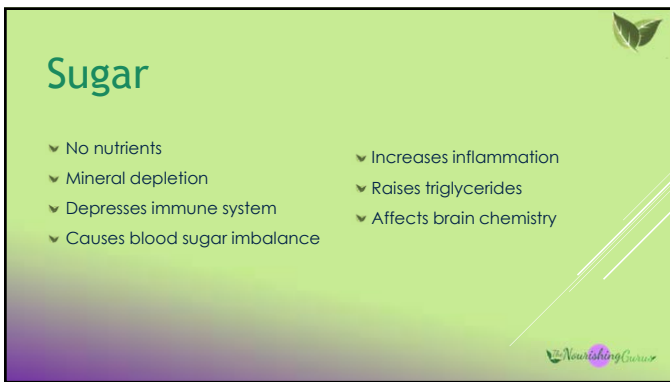


3 Main Culprits that Negatively Affect the Cells, Microbiome, and Blood Sugar





1. SUGAR/PROCESSED FOODS



Sugar

- ▼ No nutrients
- ▼ Mineral depletion
- ▼ Depresses immune system
- ▼ Causes blood sugar imbalance
- ▼ Increases inflammation
- ▼ Raises triglycerides
- ▼ Affects brain chemistry



SUGAR is inflammatory!

HEART: Association between sugar and heart disease is independent of fat and cholesterol intake, smoking or drinking

DIABETES: Data from 175 countries links higher sugar intake to increased cases of diabetes.

OBESITY: Those who consume the most sugar are 54% more likely to be overweight than those who consume the least amount.



MOOD: Can lead to irritability, behaviors and focus issues

Your brain on sugar

Sugar can be extremely addictive.

Some studies have shown it to be more addictive than cocaine.

WEAN down to adjust taste buds



Sugar

1 tsp sugar = 4 grams (divide by 4)

READ LABELS (Nutrition Facts Panel AND Ingredients)

Often hidden in breads, yogurts, granola bars, cereal


Be wary of sugar in any form – honey, 100% pure maple syrup, brown rice syrup . . . may be better alternatives BUT still stimulate sweet tooth

Sugar

Added sweeteners should not account for more **five to nine teaspoons**, or **20 to 36 grams** of added sugar per day.

Americans on average eat and drink about 22 teaspoons (88 grams!) of sugar daily. That's almost a half cup of sugar, or about 130 to 140 pounds of sugar a year!



Artificial Sweeteners

Can stimulate blood sugar

Keep sugar cravings "alive"

Can mess with microbiome

Unknown long term effects

Usually come packaged with processed food



The Nourishing Career

Processed Foods

Whole foods that have been stripped of their nutrients and altered with added chemicals and other ingredients.

Used to **lengthen the shelf life** of foods so **larger amounts can be sold over time.**

Also to **enhance addictive quality** of food
(fat, sugar, salt = addictive quality = eat more!)



The Nourishing Career

Processed Foods

Crackers

Chips

Granola bars

Frozen dinners

Frozen waffles

Cookies

Candy

Mac and cheese

Soups (some better than others)

Pancake mixes

Many things that come in a box or bag!

The Nourishing Career

PROCESSED FOODS

- Artificial Sweeteners** - splenda, aspartame, acesulfame K found in many diet or sugar-free sodas, diet coke, coke zero, jello (and other gelatins), desserts, sugar-free gum, drink mixes, baking goods, table top sweeteners, cereal, breath mints, pudding, kool-aid, ice tea, chewable vitamins, toothpaste.
- High Fructose Corn Syrup** -in many processed foods, bread, candy, flavored yogurts, salad dressings, canned vegetables, cereals
- Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)** - found in Chinese food (Chinese Restaurant Syndrome) many snacks, chips, cookies, seasonings, many soup products, frozen dinners and lunch meats. Also listed as autolyzed yeast extract, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, textured vegetable protein
- Anything hydrogenated** – sometimes found in margarine, chips and crackers, cookies, snack foods, baked goods, fast foods (last few years, being used less)



PROCESSED FOODS

- Common Food Dyes** (blue, red yellow) - in candy, cereal, soft drinks, sports drinks, fruit cocktail, maraschino cherries, cherry pie mix, ice cream, candy, bakery products, American cheese, macaroni and cheese, candy and carbonated beverages, lemonade
- Sodium Sulfite/Sulfur Dioxide** - in wine, dried fruits
- BHA and BHT** - found in potato chips, gum, cereal, frozen sausages, enriched rice, lard, shortening, candy, jello
- Bromines - Potassium Bromate** - an additive used to increase volume in some white flour, bread, and rolls, potassium bromate is known to cause cancer in animals, can affect thyroid. Even small amounts in bread can create problems for humans. **Brominated Vegetable Oils (BVOs)** in some soft drinks and citrus drinks



GMO's

75% of the processed foods found in your local grocery store

- ✓ Sugar Maltodex
- ✓ Corn Syrup Corn starch
- ✓ Soy Flour Soybean
- ✓ Cottonseed Oil
- ✓ Fructose
- ✓ Hydrolyzed Protein



(and this is not a full list)!



HEALTH IMPACT OF PROCESSED FOODS

Chemicals in Processed Foods

- Weight gain
- Blood sugar issues
- Thyroid problems
- Mood/behavior issues
- Damage to microbiome

The Nourishing Choice

Look at the Label

Most people look at package claims, fat and calories.

Also look at sugar, added sugar and especially ingredients!


More ingredients usually = more chemicals

The Nourishing Choice

Look at the label AND ingredients!

Fat? Protein? No

Refined carbs? Yes!



The Nourishing Choice

Look at the label AND ingredients!

- Artificial flavors
- Caramel color
- 160 calories
- 3 g fat
- 7 g protein (whey protein isolate*)
- 6g "fiber" (maltodextrin*)
- 1 g sugar (acesulfame potassium, sucralose)



The Nourishing Career

Look at the label AND ingredients!

Food is big business!!
Be aware of misleading advertising claims.

Look beyond claim at the ingredient list.



Whenever possible, buy foods that do not require labels, and/or have as few ingredients as possible.

The Nourishing Career

Special Caution . . .

Do whatever you can to change any rewards from a sugary, processed food to a healthier option, and/or ideally a non-food reward.

The Nourishing Career

Special Caution . . .

Ideas:

- Healthier food reward substitutes
 - Natural candy food store (naturalcandystore.com)
 - Homemade treats made with less sugar
- Non food rewards:
 - Coupon Book (choose together what goes in there; movie, sporting event)
 - Poster with images of things they like (stuck on in velcro)

Text "treats" to 444999

The Nourishing Career

Special Caution . . .

As a community

- Look to upgrade the food served at events
- Offer to send in healthier "treats" to parties and events
- Collaborate with other parents/caregivers to share recipes and ideas – make it become more the norm

The Nourishing Career

2: Food Sensitivities

Most common: gluten, dairy, soy, corn, eggs, peanuts (also found in many processed foods)

Offenders can affect the gut and also cross blood brain barrier - causing changes in mood, behavior and cognition

The Nourishing Career

Food Sensitivities

- ✓ Elimination diet can be very helpful.
- ✓ Remove all at once or one at a time for 3 weeks and track behavior, bowels, skin issues, breathing (asthma symptoms), etc.
- ✓ Consider testing for celiac, gluten/casein sensitivity, etc.

Note that gluten free ≠ healthy!



3: Stress

Lots of research on the role that stress has on aging – affects cells, microbiome and blood sugar!

Fight or Flight mechanism – increases stress hormones
In autism, stress hormones seem to stay in the body longer

Plus there is internal stress from food chemicals, food sensitivities and nutritional deficiencies



3: Stress Relief

- ✓ Exercise – check out AutismFitness.com
- ✓ Meditation
- ✓ Music
- ✓ Yoga
- ✓ Essential Oils (great support for sleep, anxiety, moods)



LET'S TALK HEALTHY DIET

We Are Making Suggestions For A Healthy Diet

Any Steps Toward Healthier Eating Will Make A Difference!

Quick Overview...

MACROS	MICROS
Proteins	Vitamins
Fats	Minerals
Carbs	Antioxidants

PROTEIN – amino acids

- Makes neurotransmitters (chemicals released by brain cells to communicate with each other)
- Slows digestion of carbs; helps balance blood sugar
- Repairs skin
- Produces hormones
- Supports your immune system

Protein Sourcing

Animal Protein*

- Pastured eggs
- Chicken and turkey
- Wild fish
- Grass fed beef and lamb
- Grass fed dairy

*Organic whenever possible



Plant Proteins

- Seeds - pumpkin, sunflower, hemp, chia and ground flax
- Beans and lentils
- High quality protein powder
- Organic tofu, tempeh, edamame (soy)





Protein Blend (**Whey Protein Isolate, Soy Protein Isolate, Milk Protein Isolate**), Chocolate Coating (**Sugar, Palm Kernel Oil, Cocoa Powder, Whey Powder, Nonfat Milk Powder, Soy Lecithin, Natural Flavor**), Caramel Layer (**Brown Rice Syrup, Sweetened Condensed Milk, Evaporated Milk, Sugar, Palm Kernel Oil, Cream, High Maltose Corn Syrup, Salt, Soy Lecithin, Mono & Diglycerides, Di-Sodium Phosphate, Natural Flavor**), **Soy Protein Crisps (Soy Protein Isolate, Tapioca Starch, Salt, Tapioca And/or Corn Fiber, Vegetable Glycerine, Hydrolyzed Gelatin, Purified Water, Peanuts, Canola Oil, Chocolate Liquor, Alkalinized Cocoa Powder, Natural Flavors, Inulin, Soy Lecithin, Sea Salt, Stevia Extract, Monk Fruit Extract.**



FATS!

- Healthy cell walls help nutrients in and waste OUT
- Create hormones
- Absorb your fat soluble vitamins ADEK
- Insulates the organs in your body
- Brain is made up of 60% fat - boosts cognition, happiness, learning, and memory
- Shed body fat
- Slow absorption of sugar in the bloodstream



Healthy Fats

- **NUTS:**
 - Natural peanut, almond or cashew butter
 - Whole almonds, cashews, pecans, walnuts, etc.
- **SEEDS**
 - Pumpkin, sunflower, chia, hemp or flax seeds (ground is best)
- **COCONUT** (oil, flakes, butter)
- **OLIVE OIL**
- **AVOCADO**
- **EGGS**, whole, organic humane certified, pastured



Healthy Fats - omega 3


- Research done on ASD, mostly on kids, but reports improved behavior, mood, speech, sleep
- Fatty fish (acronym - SMASH) - salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, herring - high Omega 3
- Ground flax seeds, pumpkin seeds, walnuts
- Supplement omega 3 capsules like Nordic Naturals; Barlean's (omega swirl)



FATS to Limit


- Canola oil
- Corn oil
- Soy oil
- Sunflower
- Safflower
- Fried foods! (fries, nuggets, chips)

Most found in processed and packaged foods



CARBOHYDRATES

- Energy
- Brain function
- Intestinal health
- Waste elimination



Carbs to Limit:
Simple/Refined

- Sugars, candy
- Cakes and cookies
- Cereals
- Crackers
- Bagels
- Pasta
- Most breads
- White rice



Healthy Carbs to Include


- Veggies
 - > Non-starchy (broccoli, carrots, greens, etc)
 - > Starchy (peas, white/sweet potatoes)
- Fruits
- Beans and lentils (black, kidney, garbanzo, etc)
- Whole grains (wild rice, quinoa, oats)



Veggies and Fruit

How many?

- 7-9 servings a day optimal
- Emphasis on veggies
- Serving size = ½ cup cooked or raw; 1 cup leafy greens



VEGGIES And FRUIT

- Soups (chop or puree veggies)
- Smoothies (fruit AND veggies)
- Roasted with olive oil and salt
- Added to meat dishes (chili, stew, meatloaf)
- Use as pasta (zucchini or spaghetti squash)
- Snacks - raw fruit and veggies (plain or dip in hummus or guacamole)



Healthy Carbs = *Real* Fiber

- Aids digestive health - GREAT for regulating bowels
- Slows down breakdown of carbs; preventing blood sugar rises and dips
- Helps you feel full (which impacts overeating and weight)
- Reduces risk of heart disease and cancer
- Provides food for beneficial bacteria



The Nourishing Curator

Daily Fiber Goal = 25-30 grams

- ✓ Oats (1/2 c): 4g
- ✓ Banana (medium): 3g
- ✓ Ground flax (2T): 4g
- ✓ Beans/lentils (1/2c): 7g
- ✓ Avocado (medium, 1/2): 6.5g
- ✓ Sweet potato (med, with skin): 4g

Provides 28.5g fiber PLUS

- > Monounsaturated and omega-3 fats
- > Host of phytonutrients
- > Potassium, calcium, B vitamins, magnesium, protein, folic acid, etc



The Nourishing Curator

Organic or not?

More \$\$, but health outweighs cost for the following:

Animal protein (meat, poultry, dairy, eggs)
Dirty dozen - foodnews.org
Whenever possible/fits in budget

Tip: use less meat, and stretch meals with more BEANS AND VEGGIES!



The Nourishing Curator

Speaking of Cost (and Convenience)

- Costco
- Thrive Market
- Trader Joes
- Wegmans
- Shop Rite


nourishinggurus.com/thrive
for 25% off first order



Healthy Breakfast Ideas


- Lower sugar, less processed cereal
- Chia pudding
- Healthy oatmeal version
- Eggs and avocado
- Healthy pancakes

Lot's of recipes on our website and our YouTube channel!



Healthy Lunch Ideas

- Chili or soup
- Egg salad
- Organic lunch turkey on whole grain or gluten free bread
- Salad ☺
- Include at least 1 vegetable serving!



Healthy Dinner Ideas

- Tacos, fajitas using organic shells and meat
- Organic rotisserie chicken
- Grass fed burgers with sweet potato fries
- Salmon with quinoa and cauli rice
- Organic ground meat with zucchini noodles

Load with
veggies if
possible!

The Nourishing Career

Healthy Snack Ideas

- Apple and nut butter
- Hummus and cut up veggies or crackers
- Healthy granola bar
- Smoothie
- Check out treats handout

The Nourishing Career

Addressing Picky Eating

Possible causes:

- ▼ Sensory
- ▼ Need for sameness
- ▼ Nutritional deficiencies - may reduce appetite or increase carb cravings
- ▼ Food sensitivities
- ▼ Digestive issues - not feeling well after eating
- ▼ Food additives

The Nourishing Career

Addressing Picky Eating

- ▼ Add new foods before taking old ones away
- ▼ If texture is an issue, make foods according to preferences – crunch, smooth, etc.
- ▼ If salt fans, look for good quality sea salt, added to veggies, make veggie "chips"
- ▼ Involve in prep!
- ▼ Add pureed veggies anywhere you can
- ▼ Give healthier versions of sweets (download our guide)



Putting It All Into Practice

Remember ...

1 step at a time



10 Ways to Get Started

1. Start reading labels
2. Add 1 more veggie serving a day
3. Add 1 more fruit serving a day
4. Make 1 healthy homemade treat to replace a less healthier standby
5. Upgrade 1 meal consistently
6. Teach them about healthy eating
7. Have cut up veggies always available in the fridge
8. Have them in the kitchen helping as much as possible
9. Always offer something healthy first
10. Talk to other parents/caregivers/therapists/social activity directors – coordinate healthier eating





The Nourishing Gurus

www.NourishingGurus.com
admin@nourishinggurus.com
[Facebook.com/NourishingGurus](https://www.facebook.com/NourishingGurus)

(609) 285-3090