

## Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

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**("constipation" , "IBS" , "irritable bowel symptoms" , "diarrhea", "diarrhoea", keyword only)**

**[1324] 160b: Annatto made him “punch himself repeatedly in the head with a closed fist and also bang his head against the wall” (March 2015)**

My son was about two and a half at the time, when I noticed his extreme reaction to eating 160b. We used to use margarine and eat Streets vanilla icecream (I thought by choosing vanilla flavoured products I was avoiding the colours and potential nasties). When he ate these products he would punch himself repeatedly in the head with a closed fist and also bang his head against the wall. Obviously as a parent, this behaviour caused me great concern, only to be reassured by people that it is just a phase and he will grow out of it. This was the start of my journey exploring food additives and the effects they have on behaviour and children. After buying a book and reading up I decided to cut out products with annatto, and made the switch to Peter's Vanilla Icecream and back to real butter. Within a very short time this headbanging behaviour ceased. No parent should have to watch their child physically hurt themselves as a result of what they eat!

As you say, if you notice one reaction to food there will be more. Every time we used to go to Pancake Parlour and have the two stack pancakes with icecream he would have stomach cramps and diarrhoea that day. We have visited doctors on several occasions regarding stomach cramps and recurrent diarrhoea. They wanted him to have blood tests but I was reluctant as he was still young.

Other difficult behaviours have remained with our son. He falls in the upper range of normal behaviour, borderline ADHD, shows some autism symptoms and we are off to a Child Psychologist tomorrow for his anger which is escalating into rage. After buying your books and DVD at the talk and chatting with you I feel empowered to start the RPAH diet. I've had one appointment with a recommended dietitian and on Monday our family will start on the RPAH diet. If he can stop making the silly whoop whoop noises and been argumentative, restless and confrontational then this will be well and truly worth it (and I'm a little excited to see just how I react to certain foods! My husband not so much!)

Thank you so much for the time and energy that you and Howard put in to educating the general public about food additives. You are making a huge difference to so many families! - Sarah (report received December 2011)

**[1314] 160b: "pins and needles in his head and they wouldn't go away" (March 2015)**

We already knew that our son was hyper-sensitive to food colourings, especially 160b. We first discovered this when his sister was born when our son was 2 - he was head-banging til he cut and bruised his forehead. His behaviour was always "full on", he was impulsive, always demanding

attention, his speech was delayed, but he was a fabulous sleeper. Numerous people suggested we have him assessed for autism or Aspergers. We had speech and hearing assessments. We cut out 160b for a while, and then inadvertently when he was about 3 my husband bought the wrong custard. I gave it to him anyway thinking that the food colouring link was a bit tenuous. Within 30mins he was headbanging something he hadn't done for nearly a year. The remainder of the custard went in the bin! I was really strict at not buying anything with 160b - but not really with anything else.

Last year when he was 6 and in kindergarten, his behaviour became appalling again, to the point that his teacher told me that I needed to get some help from a child psychologist to help me be a "better parent". You can only imagine how distressing this was as I was already at my wits end with a difficult child. I went home and immediately went through the pantry and discovered that foods and brands that were previously free of 160b now had it in it. One product was the apricot bites you buy in the health food section. My kids saw me with them and asked if they could have them, so I decided to tempt fate and see what happened. Within 15mins Charlie was sitting in a chair gyrating arms and legs flapping and head going up and down. Then he started hitting his forehead. I asked him what was wrong, and now, unlike when he was 2, he could now explain the sensation. He said he had pins and needles in his head and they wouldn't go away. Banging his head helped temporarily. The next day he was frightful.

Once we eliminated 160b again, his behaviour improved considerably, but despite seeming to be a very intelligent little boy, he wasn't and still isn't doing well at school. His teacher has expressed concern that he has gone backwards this year, that he can't sit still in class, he finds it very difficult to concentrate and stay focused, he is easily distracted, and he hums all the time. At home he makes silly noises, is always stirring up his sister, gets upset very quickly, is incredibly impatient and cries and screams when he doesn't get his way.

I love my kids, but I'm exhausted by them. I already know he is sensitive and now after reading "Fed Up", know that I have to eliminate a lot more than I have. Interestingly, I feel so many of my health issues are related to additives as well. The most bothersome being severe IBS since I had my appendix out 18 months ago. I was given Flagyl while in hospital and then had 6 weeks of severe diarrhoea. As a one-on-one music teacher, I can't continue to work with the amount of gas my body seems to produce. I tend to laugh about it, but it is a real issue. Like so many others, my GP and the gastroenterologist I saw have said to me "Good news, nothing is wrong!" It makes me want to scream! So, I am desperate to find someone who might help me do the elimination diet with my kids (my daughter, while pretty well behaved had awful eczema as a baby, doesn't sleep well, is often irritable after school and had constant chest infections and thus antibiotics when she was 2-3 yrs old). Their grandmother suffers horrible migraines that are definitely food induced. I know that they are both bright intelligent and adorable kids underneath the irritable and often badly behaved exteriors. I'm petrified that I'm going to do long term damage to them psychologically because I end up so strained and exhausted that I yell a lot. I hate myself for saying this, but I often feel that I wish I didn't have kids as it's so much harder being a parent than I thought it would be. In fact, I don't enjoy it at all - Helen (story reported in May 2011)

Update 4 years later: About a year after I wrote I found out I had a gut parasite (*Dientamoeba fragilis*). Our son had the parasite too, so we had various course of antibiotics and anti-parasitics and within weeks he was a different child. I didn't tell the school what we were doing as I wanted to test whether there really was change - when he came home with a Principals award for "trying hard to be a more responsible learner" I burst into tears. Even so, he remained, and remains, sensitive to annatto, and indeed many other colours, additives, preservatives etc.

Jump forward to roughly now, and I am still struggling with my gut and my daughter in particular has been quite difficult. Three weeks ago I re-read "Fed Up" and decided to try removing all additives. I was strict for a week - and it was bliss. The kids were so different - calm, no fighting, arguing, whining, sleeping better, more focused etc. And I then decided to use up some topping (Cottees chocolate and caramel topping - preservative 202). The next morning they were horrible - so everything with anything on the bad list, was thrown in the bin. The kids are back to their beautiful selves - and I must say, for the first time in ages, I've actually enjoyed being a parent.

They're both very intelligent kids, but the massive block to them achieving their potential has been food.

I'm in my third year of a Bachelor of Science (Nutrition) with the hope of becoming a dietitian. Much of what is written is obviously the motivation/inspiration - Helen

#### **[1290] Does food avoidance lead to increased food sensitivity? - facebook thread (November 2014)**

My son's been fairly strictly failsafe for nearly 9 years. We are going to do challenges again after Xmas but I'm pretty sure (from when we've allowed non failsafe days) that his tolerance of previous foods has improved heaps. He initially vomited and had extreme diarrhoea for cows' milk and Sals. No longer - Amanda

#### **[1287] One liners (November 2014)**

I have had diarrhea for 20 years. I eliminated salicylates one week ago, and have seen a dramatic turnaround! Amazing! ....I've completed three weeks now, with excellent digestion! There was only one exception. We ate out in the mall. Got bad diarrhea. Interestingly, it hit 36 hours later. A delayed reaction, that I've learned from you. Two days to recover. After that, no salicylates, no problems! Consistent good digestion! This is so fantastic! - American living in the Philippines

#### **[1279] Only taken 30+ years to find out I'm a coeliac! (September 2014)**

I am 52 and been having extreme IBS symptoms, heart burn, upset stomachs, stomach ache when eating bread and a sensitivity to wine, I also found out I have an intolerance to preservatives. For the past four years I have noticed I have become lethargic and feeling exhausted after eating fruit, particularly bananas.

I have lost count the amount of times I have been to different Drs and believe I have been misdiagnosed. I used to put it mostly down to stress then going into other stressful jobs also getting

older etc. I started my own research on Dr Google and found out that preservatives, amines and salicylates are a problem for me.

I visited one of your recommended dietitians as I was getting further and further confused on the internet and thought she could give me a sensible food path to follow. One visit to her and she suggested I consult a doctor to possibly see if they could help.

Well the doctor was surprised I hadn't been referred to have an endoscopy....One endoscopy later and I'm a Coeliac....YAHOO, ONLY TAKEN 30 + YRS TO FIND OUT. I was recently diagnosed as fructose intolerant but they said I could be dairy intolerant also. I am hoping this is just my stomach reacting and that I will be able to have dairy at a later stage. I miss my coffee and rice milk just doesn't cut it.

I also could have Barretts disease, which explains all the heartburn and acid which was not stress.

The stomach pains, depression, severe mood swings and general feeling of waking up and already completed a marathon have started to slowly dissipate, every day I am feeling just a hint better, the feeling of being depressed is actually more than 90% gone.

Now that I am in a better frame of mind I will look at some support groups to help myself and share my knowledge with others. I am disappointed that many Drs did not recommend me to have an endoscopy. It would have saved having my coccyx removed for a start; over 20 years ago they thought my coccyx was playing up when I discovered bread was causing me to have haemorrhoids, but nothing to do with the tailbone at all. - Anthony by email.

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

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

#### **[1267] Salicylate intolerance and dermatitis "I'm living again instead of dying" (July 2014)**

Your site is a life saver. I've been suffering from many of the symptoms associated with salicylate intolerance, especially dermatitis. Poisoning myself on what I thought was an extremely good diet. What an education. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Four months later: My symptoms have completely resolved, simply through steadfastly following failsafe eating. When you've been ailing as badly as I was and to now to be well, merely by eliminating certain foods, that's proof. I have healthy skin, hair and stronger nails. No more frequent urination, no more constipation and my sleeping patterns are normal. I breathe easily, have strong energy and a clear, happy frame of mind. I'm living again instead of dying. The old saying "the proof is in the eating" is true. Failsafe eating works. My doctors agree.

Failsafe eating is being kind to your body and eating what's right for you.

Your research, diet and site is a life changer. Sincerely, I can't thank you enough - reader from Victoria.

**[1215] One-liners (July 2013)**

My second son had IBS all his life, we started FS in Feb and amines were found to be the problem! 4 days on FS and his IBS disappeared; 24 hours on amine challenge and he was screaming in pain! – Tanja

**[1214] FODMAPs not enough for my IBS (July 2013)**

I was diagnosed with IBS about 2 years ago and told to follow the FODMAP diet to reduce symptoms. The last few months my symptoms flared right up again and so I dragged myself back to the doctors and a dietician and I have now been told I have to cut out salicylates and amines (at least initially) as that is likely to be my problem. After one week on the elimination diet I have noticed a huge improvement, apart from the fact I am missing all my usual fare like spinach, coconut, berries, tomato and the list goes on! I am so grateful though for the relief, I actually feel normal again. Thanks! – Lisa

(see also FAQs <http://fedup.com.au/information/frequently-asked-questions/diet-questions#fodmap> and <http://fedup.com.au/information/frequently-asked-questions/diet-questions#fodmap2>)

**[1206] 'Feeling like a drunken sailor is not just "the way I am" - it is possible to have a fog-free brain and a calm, happy life!' (July 2013)**

I'm 22 years old and have always had issues with anxiety, and since I was in my early teens I've suffered from bowel problems. I saw a doctor about it a few years ago who diagnosed me with IBS and said there wasn't much I could do. I was put on the fodmap diet and saw some improvement, but my anxiety seemed to get worse. Then my Mum told me about you because she had some kids at school trialling the diet to treat their ADHD.

I bought your book and I felt like you were writing about me and my family! All of us have symptoms of food intolerance: my sister who is hypoglycaemic and prone to mood swings and my brother who is withdrawn, quiet and unmotivated. I could relate to so many of the symptoms: reflux as a baby, constant ear infections as a child, anxiety and OCD habits (handwashing, wringing my hands etc) and in my teenage years I felt distracted, foggy brained, unmotivated and developed depression in my last year of high school.

Since I've started the elimination diet there has been a slow improvement, and it wasn't until I considered everything together that I realised how much better I feel. I could go on forever with the improvements! I don't feel drunk or dizzy anymore, I don't take 5 wrong turns when driving to the shops (used to happen all the time), I can concentrate at uni and feel more awake, I am calm and so much happier, don't snap at my boyfriend over silly things AND my stomach cramps and bloating are gone: I have normal bowel movements for the first time in years!!!! My boyfriend has been really supportive and did the diet with me, not expecting much. I saw changes in him from the first week- he is happier, calmer and more enthusiastic about life. He even said to me when we reintroduced sals that he felt like his patience got much shorter and he had trouble sleeping.

I've only done two food challenges so far: I tested dairy first, since I had thought for years that I was lactose intolerant, and passed. I've just completed the sals challenge and it seems to be a culprit. I went for a week feeling fine, though I did have a little bit of dermatitis on my hands and a day where i felt sad and a bit hopeless. I kept on because I wanted to be more certain, and it didn't take long! From around day 8 I felt tired, distracted and 'drunk while driving' again, I slept over 10 hours each night but woke feeling exhausted, snapped at my boyfriend over nothing and had trouble controlling my body temperature, like I had a cold. It has taken me around 3 days to start feeling better, but I am already feeling more lucid. I'm just so excited to finally know where to start to feel better :) Finding out about the RPAH elimination diet and the Food Intolerance Network has made me realise that feeling like a drunken sailor every day is not "just the way I am" and that it is possible to have a fog-free brain and a calm, happy life! :)

Thanks so much Sue, for everything that you're doing to help people feel well, and helping kids to avoid a life of medication and labels! - Isobel, by email

#### **[1194] One-liners (March 2013)**

Just wanted to say a huge THANKYOU to Sue & Howard! Have a daughter who has been failsafe for 5 years now. Though it is still really difficult @ times, she is massively improved since we discovered you by googling 'explosive diarrhoea.' Love your work, & our happier little girl!! Veronica from facebook group

#### **[1130] Probiotics led to gluten tolerance (September 2012)**

My irritable bowel symptoms are normally well controlled by a low salicylate diet but five months ago I had travellers diarrhoea that I just couldn't seem to get over. During a course of VSL#3 (which is very expensive!) my symptoms worsened so much that I ended up gluten free as well as strictly failsafe. A pharmacist recommended Naturopathica GastroHealth4 because "we stock this for a regular customer who says 'this brand really works'". After two courses of GH4 I have improved so much I am now able to tolerate gluten again including wholemeal bread and pasta that previously would have been unthinkable for me, can tolerate some moderate salicylates and I no longer need to take probiotics. - Sue by email.

See more including 3 scientific references at <http://fedup.com.au/factsheets/additive-and-natural-chemical-factsheets/probiotics>

**[1122] Forgetful and stomach cramps on FODMAP elimination diet (August 2012)**

I have been suffering from various IBS-like symptoms for several years and have finally decided to do something about it. A couple of months ago I went to see a dietitian and following her advice tried a FODMAP elimination diet for a month. Although there was improvement in some areas there was a decline in others. I became VERY forgetful and suffered stomach cramps when eating what turned out to be foods high in salicylates. - Sharon

**[1117] One-liners after Fedup Roadshow (August 2012)**

Thank you for your fantastic books, they have "cured" me after 40 years of chronic pain. Yay! 40 years sounds like I am old, but I am only just 46 so you can imagine how wonderful and life changing this is for me :) It turns out that for me "dairy" (not lactose) causes constipation and salicylates cause stomach pain and severe bloating and distention. So I am avoiding all dairy and minimising salicylates. –

Chris, by email

**[1045] 319: Very sick and severe constipation from TBHQ in soymilk**

When my son started on the elimination diet at first he wouldn't eat much and was drinking a lot of soymilk. After he had been drinking So Good soymilk for two years, he got very sick and suffered severe constipation for over 6 months. I couldn't get a straight answer from the manufacturer, at first they denied their product contained antioxidants. I was given the wrong information for two years until they agreed they were using an oil containing 319 (TBHQ). After I complained to the council they changed their labelling or was it just a coincidence? I don't think it's good enough. I switched my son to another brand of soymilk and he did much better but I'm just so angry about manufacturers getting away with making our children sick with what they put in their foods. – M....., NSW (Thanks to the dedication of this mother, Sanitarium So Good is now free of nasty antioxidants)

**[1044] 320: Stomach and behavioural reaction to unlisted antioxidants in ricemilk (from submission to FSANZ 2006)**

I have two young boys with autism and severe food intolerances. They become exceedingly ill when consuming any gluten, dairy or soy product, and I have kept these products from their diet successfully for the past 5 years. My children are also severely intolerant of various food additives, including BHA. Two days ago I purchased a carton of Rice Milk, and after one glass both of my children suffered stomach pains and diarrhoea; and the elder son suffered shaking, sweating, and fever. Both boys behaviour became extremely hyperactive and suffered erratic mood swings. (Thanks to this mother and the one below for contacting the manufacturer, the Vitasoy range is now free of nasty antioxidants) – N..., WA

**[1039] 320: Irritable bowel reactions to 321 BHT and 320 BHA (from submission to FSANZ 2006)**

The food that I react to the worst is oil because of the 321 BHT manmade antioxidant and 320 BHA, and then I also react to all the foods that the oil is in. For example: most frozen pastries - like sausage rolls, party pies, family pies, pastry sheets, even some gelati/sorbet as well. Homebrand

mint slice biscuits - they are shocking, having both 320 and 321! All margarines, and spreadable butters - if you can spread it, it's in there. Also as you know, because there is a limit on how much they can put in before they have to mention the additive - I get caught out easily with a lot of foods because I don't know if the 321 is in there and I might take the risk. Most foods just frustratingly say 'oil' but they never say what is in the flipping oil! Where I used to live, there were two different fish and chips shops, one I would get very sick from, the other I would be fine. I can only cook with a few brands of oil and pure butter, because even a teaspoon of a spreadable butter mixed into a huge pasta bake makes me very ill.

First thing that happens is I start to get an uncomfortable feeling in my gut, right across the middle. Sometimes, it's only gas, but it's chronic gas - the kind that gives you extreme abdominal discomfort until it's released and then it's foul smelling. And it's never just one, they go for hours. If I don't get extreme gas, I'll get the uncomfortable feeling in my stomach that feels like pain soaking into my gut trickling through like spidery fingers and within 20 minutes if I'm not on a toilet quick smart, I am in extreme pain. Pain that stabs through my guts and makes me intensely sensitive to the cold, so if the toilet is cold, which most usually are and I don't have a big jacket on I am in serious pain/trouble. While all that is happening on the toilet, I am experiencing extreme diarrhoea. - B....., Vic

**[1000] Sorbates, nitrates: Preservatives cause mouth ulcers and irritable bowel (March 2011)**

I am in my sixties. I can tell if a product has sorbates by the sore spots that develop in the mouth and then develop into mouth ulcers. With margarine (the RPA recommended challenge) it tends to build up over several meals. I have also worked out the preservatives in meats, particularly bacon and silverside, give a disturbed alimentary canal showing signs at the rear end. - Trevor, by email

**[987] Annatto 160b: Annatto and years of constant diarrhoea (March 2011)**

It took me a LONG time to pinpoint Annatto as the cause of my problems. For years I just lived with constant diarrhea. It was at the end of 2009 and beginning of 2010 I started to develop new problems. I started getting severe abdominal pain (like nothing I had before) and then a few months later I started getting extremely bloated. The bloating caused me to have unusual belching fits which just added to the embarrassment of my situation. In Feb 2010, my wife and I took a week long cruise... most of the food on the cruise didn't bother me; for the most part I was symptom-free that week!

When we returned from our trip all my problems returned (much like your story). Then in March a new symptom ... I started to get some very unusual and severe pain in my nether regions to the point that it was uncomfortable to sit down. I went to go see my PCP about the burping, abdominal pain, and my "new" problem.

He diagnosed me as having celiac sprue disease and hemorrhoids. A few weeks went by; the problems continued even with a new diet. The pain in my bottom came and went. Then finally in March, I ended up finding out one of my problems was not hemorrhoids but a perianal cyst that I had to have lanced.

After speaking with the proctologist following my surgery and telling him about all my recent problems he decided to perform a colonoscopy to rule out colitis and Crohns. Colonoscopy was clean but the only thing they could tell me was that they thought I had IBS.

Finally, in August I went to go see an Allergist. The allergist performed a scratch test and put me on a BRAT (bananas, rice, applesauce, toast!) diet. I spent the next three months slowly adding unprocessed food back into my diet. When it was time to add dairy I began having problems again. It was only after speaking with my older sister that she told me she had problems with food dyes. Her problems were skin related (rashes / eczema). She explained to me that yellow cheese has a dye in it (little did I know at the time).

So, I decided to "re-challenge" dairy but this time with just milk--no problems! I then added yellow cheese to my diet--problems again! Finally, tested white cheese--no problems! It was a eureka moment! :)

I still make a few mistakes from time to time but I have been mostly symptom free since making that discovery. I now have no doubt that ALL my problems (including my cyst) were due to my intake of annatto in all the foods I ate. – by email, USA (we would like to hear from others who are affected by annatto with these symptoms or others: [suedengate@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suedengate@ozemail.com.au))

#### **[984] Annatto 160b: Severe delayed vomiting and diarrhea after annatto (March 2011)**

I'm a 40 year old physician who has a severe reaction to consuming annatto. If I eat any significant amount, I have the onset of severe vomiting and diarrhea roughly 12 hours later, which then persists for 12-24 hours. I don't have any classic "type I hypersensitivity" symptoms such as hives, just a severe delayed gastrointestinal symptoms. I've managed to effectively avoid annatto since the age of 4 or 5, except for rare exposures every 3-10 years since the age of 4 or 5. I've only recently learned about annatto and concluded that it is the additive that explains my intolerance to certain foods.

Here's my brief story. At a very early age, about age 5, I refused to eat cheese since I insisted it made me sick. My mother tells a story that she didn't believe this, had me eat some, and recalls "sure enough, he threw up!" However, I could drink milk and other dairy products without problem. As a teen, I figured out (the hard way) that white cheese like mozzarella didn't cause a problem, but yellow cheese did. So I continued to avoid yellow cheese, knowing that it made me ill. Everyone around me thought my aversion was odd, and I suspect many people thought it was my imagination. I would accidentally eat something with yellow cheese added every 5-10 years, get severe symptoms, and this would reinforce my belief that I really did have a "physical" intolerance.

I learned of annatto a year ago, and finally my reaction made sense. This connection was reinforced when I got sick a couple of weeks ago, and I assumed it was the flu since I had not eaten cheese. My wife looked in our refrigerator, and sure enough we had some orange yogurt with annatto added. I had eaten two the night before.

I'll also mention that at baseline, with no annatto exposure, I tend to have symptoms consistent with mild irritable bowel syndrome. I've never bothered to ask for a diagnosis, and am used to living with

it. So, my pattern hasn't been chronic IBS symptoms with chronic annatto exposure, but severe reactions when I get exposed very rarely. – Physician, USA

**[978] Probiotics for antibiotic-associated diarrhoea (October 2010)**

After a course of antibiotics I had diarrhoea for weeks but probiotics (Inner Health) sorted me out in a week. - byemail, Qld

**[972] 160b: Annatto and IBS in a 3 yo (October 2010)**

I first noticed the annatto/IBS connection (bad smelling gas, diarrhea, loose stools) with my 3 year old son specifically with processed cheese singles, so I try to keep him away from those and generally don't have a problem, or if so, it is only small. Recently, we were away for almost a week, and when we came back, he started taking these "gummy vites" children's vitamins ("all natural" and sure enough colored with all natural annatto) he hadn't had for some time, and it was like a switch went off and the symptoms were back full force. - Anna, US

**[971] Fructose or salicylates? (October 2010)**

When my son was a baby, he suffered with reflux and eczema and was a terrible sleeper. He was breastfed, so I removed salicylates from both my diet and his. He became more settled and his eczema cleared up; particularly his dry, red cheeks. Gradually the salicylates crept back into the diet, and since he has outgrown most of his eczema and I d forgotten all about them.

However, I have a hunch that salicylates contribute to him being so defiant and angry when things don't go his way. Hisbehaviour has always been challenging, but has been particularly bad in recent weeks.

After complaining of bloating, diarrhoea etc a breath test revealed that he was fructose intolerant. So we started on the strict fructose elimination diet. My GP asked me a couple of weeks later how the diet was going. I responded that it was going well and that my son had not complained of bloating, stomach pains, etc since. However the thing I had noticed the most was his improved behaviour. I'm sure my GP thought I was a little odd, and commented that it wasn't something he'd heard of before but perhaps my son's behaviour is better because he doesn't have tummy pains. I wasn't convinced.

After a few weeks, we started a challenge by reintroducing the high fructose foods. He seemed to tolerate them well as long as he doesn't eat too much fruit each day. However, his behaviour has been foul! He seems more angry than ever, and last week I was wondering if he may be ODD. The 123 Magic which worked well for so long, now has no impact as he is just so defiant.

So, I started failsafe eating 6 days ago. We haven't done it perfectly as his diet is very restricted due to food allergies and the fructose intolerance. But I've removed the high salicylate items, particularly tomatoes, strawberries and cantelope; andwe re really just having the good ol meat and 3 veg for tea every night. I've cut his fruit intake to 1 serve every 2-3 days.

Day 1 perfect behaviour although it was still like walking on egg shells.

Day 2 bad morning, good afternoon.

Day 3 good behaviour a little less eggshells!

Day 4, 5, 6 great behaviour.

When things are good he is the perfect gentleman, well mannered a real angel. But when things aren't going his way he still gets grumpy but most of the time he can now control the anger. A week or more ago, he just couldn't. It's early days, and of course we haven't followed the diet properly, but I can see a difference already. – by email, Vic

### **[970] Sneaky poos and severe constipation improve within a week (July 2005)**

My son is 6 years old and for the past year he has suffered from Sneaky Poos and has also suffered from SEVERE constipation. His bowel was so enlarged that he dirtied his pants on a daily basis. He claimed he could not feel it when he messed his pants.

As you can imagine, this was an extremely embarrassing problem for my little boy. I had taken him to the doctor on numerous occasions and was given Parachoc and Duphalac which I administered on a daily basis, and even though they did work, they did not solve the problem as to why he was dirtying his pants EVERY day. I also took him to the Continence Clinic to determine whether or not he had a psychological problem with going to the toilet. Although they were wonderful and supportive, my son still continued to mess his pants.

I was at my wits end, and very near hysterical when I was blamed for my son's behaviour. I went and saw my doctor who mentioned that he had heard of a "lady who deals with food additives" and referred me to a dietitian.

The results are amazing ...my son was placed on the strict elimination diet, and the results were clearly seen by the end of the first week. He is now going to the toilet every second morning and not messing his pants during the day. He has lost weight, and his concentration span has slightly improved. I am only in week 3 and still sticking to the diet with him. He loves coming shopping with me and purchasing his special "Treats". He tasted Brussels sprouts for the first time in his life and actually liked them (no sorry I cannot succumb to them!) I will continue on the diet and commence the challenges soon. I am so pleased with the results. – Anna, Qld

### **[959] Unexplained diarrhoea & stomach pain (October 2010)**

I am a frustrated mother of a beautiful 4 year old boy. I have taken my son to see numerous GPs, dietitians & gastroenterologists, all of who have told me that the Elimination Diet is too restrictive, too hard, not worth the effort or words to that effect. However, upon discovering The Failsafe Cookbook & Fed Up books and starting him on the diet by avoiding the artificial additives, we have noticed significant improvement in his symptoms. The initial symptoms were unexplained diarrhoea & stomach pain. However, an unexpected and exciting benefit of this diet is that his behaviour has dramatically improved. He isn't as irritable, more compliant and a lot more pleasant to be around - Anita by email.

**[955] A2: Irritable bowel symptoms transformed by A2 milk (July 2010)**

For the past 18+ months my wife has suffered from an increasing problem with gut issues and chronic diarrhea and related symptoms. She has tried various milks and milk substitutes (soy, etc). None have made any difference to her gut problems. Her GP has not found any specific cause and has recommended a range of tests and indicated it was probably "irritable bowel syndrome" which I'm sure you know is one of the catch-all medical labels which basically means "we don't really know".

On pure chance my wife (who had seen your report a couple of years ago on A2) decided about 6 weeks ago she had nothing to lose by trying A2 milk.

Our life has been transformed and this happened literally overnight! Gut patterns are back to normal, a far far cry from many daily urgent dashes to the loo, usually immediately after eating or drinking almost anything but particularly things containing dairy products. Literally life became normal within 4 hours of her first bowl of oatmeal with A2 milk. Absolutely amazing. The transformation has been astounding and we are very grateful to the people that have figured out the A2 story - Russell by email.

**[942] 621: Supraventricular Tachycardia (October 2010)**

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

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

**[929] Irritable bowel symptoms transformed by A2 milk (July 2010)**

For the past 18+ months my wife has suffered from an increasing problem with gut issues and chronic diarrhea and related symptoms. She has tried various milks and milk substitutes (soy, etc). None have made any difference to her gut problems. Her GP has not found any specific cause and has recommended a range of tests and indicated it was probably "irritable bowel syndrome" which I'm sure you know is one of the catch-all medical labels which basically means "we don't really know".

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The transformation has been astounding and we are very grateful to the people that have figured out the A2 story - Russell by email.

**[884] 160b: Marlene's story: annatto 160b and IBS (November 2009)**

First, may I tell you my husband is a retired Allergist and Immunologist and he observed my IBS experiences then elimination of them. For more than 40 years I had diarrhea and severe intestinal pain. The symptoms changed as the years passed. It went from occasional to frequent and from mild to severe. This leads me to believe it is dose and frequency related. The four years prior to my discovery that annatto was the problem for me, it was daily and severe. I would get an excruciating stomach ache with bloating after 20 minutes of ingestion of an annatto product. After another 20 minutes I had an emergency run to the WC and a long bout with painful diarrhea followed by many more trips to the WC. Then, I was enervated and just wanted to do nothing and sometimes for days after. I wasn't lactose intolerant nor did I have Celiac Sprue (which the doctors considered). In 2005, after a colonoscopy, my GI diagnosed me with IBS. The symptoms continued until 2006, when I was able to pinpoint what caused my IBS symptoms.

On a 37 day trip to Europe, I had no symptoms and was "normal". I thought about what I was eating in the States and not in Europe. Coffee Mate came to mind. I was asymptomatic the entire trip except for one cup of coffee with a non-dairy product on the plane. Aha! Back in the States, I stayed off Coffee Mate and was fine. 30 days later I tried it and the IBS returned. A few weeks later I ate a scoop of vanilla ice cream; IBS again. What they had in common was annatto, so I researched annatto. There are hundreds of papers on annatto but not one linking annatto to IBS. My husband ordered pure annatto and experimented on me. I got the full-blown IBS when we shared a glass of water with annatto. He didn't. Annatto predictably results in IBS symptoms of intestinal pain and diarrhea in me. It doesn't make sense I could be the only one who gets IBS symptoms from Annatto!

- Marlene 2009 [mmarlenemm@hotmail.com](mailto:mmarlenemm@hotmail.com)

**[883] 160b: Another report of annatto and irritable bowel symptoms (November 2009)**

I am a 43 mother and have done the RPA elimination diet twice. I have Colitis and my big 3 "no-no's" are: annatto 160b, synthetic antioxidants such as BHA 320, and sorbates. Of these, annatto is the worst. – Kate, NSW

**[882] 160b: Yet another report of annatto and irritable bowel symptoms (extract from [464])**

Seven years ago at the age of 55 I had a very nasty gastro-intestinal virus which led to CFS and IBS. Because of the severity of the IBS, I had many tests - some nasty, with scary implications. Finally, a very helpful dietitian (who works closely with the RPAH allergy unit) put me onto the elimination

diet nearly 2 years ago. We have found that I have numerous intolerances: lactose, gluten, salicylates, amines, soy, MSG, sorbitol, sulphites, benzoates, annatto - to name a few.... – by email

**[870] 635: Ribo Rash in a 7-year-old (November 2009)**

My 7 year old daughter has reactions to flavour enhancers which cause a rash across her body. Her first reaction that I could pinpoint was to Chinese food that she ate around 5-6 months ago. She has been getting small rashes for the last couple of years, but I have never been able to pinpoint what was causing them. We had Chinese one night and a couple of hours later she had a severe rash all over her body. My first reaction was something in her bed, so I put her in my bed and the next day the rash was gone. That day we had left over Chinese for tea and the rash appeared again. So I looked on the internet about what may cause it and everything pointed towards MSG. Once I cleaned out my cupboards of flavour enhancer foods, the rashes stopped. She has had a few reactions since such as hamburgers from Woolworths which said flavours on the packet, but no codes.

Your site helped me to pinpoint what was happening to her, and her doctor thought your site was very useful.

*Two months later:*

For about 4-5 years my daughter has suffered a lot of constipation, normally to the extreme where it would be days that she would go without a bowel motion, and when she finally did she would take ages and be in a lot of pain. Since taking flavour enhancers out of her diet, the bowel motions are normal. - by email, SA

**[802] One-liners (June 2009)**

“Your books and the Failsafe Network are huge lifelines for me with my 2 year old daughter who has IBS reactions to a wide range of foods and food chemicals” - Janelle by email

**[800] 200, 160b, 320: Big “no-no’s” cause cramping and diarrhea (June 2009)**

I am a 43 mother and have done the RPA elim diet. I have Colitis that was triggered by a single episode of food poisoning ten years ago. It took a long time to get a diagnosis of microscopic colitis. For a long time I was told that it was irritable bowel. Finally a colonoscopy and biopsy showed it - a very under-diagnosed condition. My big 3 "no-no's" are: annatto 160b, synthetic antioxidants such as BHA 320, and sorbates. All of those cause cramping and diarrhoea. – Kate, by email

**[782] Morning sickness and other symptoms in mother and children due to diet (June 2009)**

We only found out about "Fed Up With Food Additives" when Maternal & Child Health nurse suggested we look at a possible problem with food chemicals for our youngest child's (14 months) eating disorder. However, now that I think about it, I was violently ill during my pregnancies after eating high salicylate foods - particularly broccoli, cucumber and citrus fruits – even the smell of these foods would make me queasy.

My IBS symptoms have cleared up since I have reduced the number of high salicylate foods in my diet (I was doing it for the kids so also have adjusted my husband's diet and my own). I used to think I was doing the right thing by eating a huge fruit salad every day, and wondered why my digestive system was so messed up. I have also suffered from a hives-like rash all over my thighs for the past few years and couldn't work it out - I now have long rash free periods after avoiding dried fruit as much as possible, as well as msg, yeast extract, 627, 635 etc. We avoid additives as much as possible but occasionally I slip up and we really notice the effects now.

My 9 year old daughter seems to become very vague and forgetful with amines - especially cheese - and we have found our 3 year old son to react badly to glutamates - he becomes quite aggressive and uncontrollable. The other thing we have noticed is the effect of colours - my daughter becomes very silly and hyperactive - for example, today she had a 'slushie' at the local shops that a family member bought for her - tonight she is jumping all over the house, falling off chairs, making silly noises and facial expressions etc. But I'm sure you've heard all of this before!

I have found the effects on my kids particularly interesting, as when I was a child, I was unable to have food with MSG (I got severe migraines including vomiting) and red-coloured foods/cordial made me vomit badly. Thank you so much for really making a difference to our lives. – Michelle by email

#### **[727] IBS from fructose malabsorption plus defiance from salicylates and amines (June 2009)**

I have 2 kids (2 and 4 yrs) with fructose malabsorption and my daughter has irritable behaviour and defiance from salicylates and amines so we are looking at a combination of low fructose and failsafe eating. – by email, VIC

#### **[716] Ear infections, stuttering, rash, IBS linked to milk (February 2009)**

We initially started my three year old son on the diet because of his hyperactivity, defiance and rough, impulsive play with others. Once we started the diet these symptoms slowed down but he developed new symptoms of increased emotional state and abdominal cramps. What we didn't realise at first was that we had increased his milk intake and so although the diet seemed to work it brought with it new problems. In hindsight I now have a list of symptoms such as stuttering, pale stools, abdominal cramping, poor appetite, face rash, ear infections, hyperactivity, defiance, dribbling, thumb sucking, rough play and itching head, that I can now link to cows milk as these have all gone since we eliminated it and its derivatives from his diet. I had been to doctors about these individually but was never taken seriously so never connected them all together.

At this stage we think that too many amines make him nasty and too many salicylates make him hyper and we haven't tested additives. Since we took him off the cows milk as well and got over the withdrawals my son now no longer needs speech therapy, has a great appetite and is putting on weight, is able to enjoy play dates, is calm, doesn't complain of tummy ache etc and our life is much easier. We are a much happier family. I think we have further to go in our adjustment to the new diet but we are definitely leaps and bounds ahead from where we were pre-failsafe days. We saw your Kids First campaign launch interview on TV, thanks for being a voice for all us parents out there wanting to scream the same message! - Kylie, by email [Although rarely mentioned by doctors, milk

is strongly linked to ear infections (otitis media) Juntti H and others, Cow's milk allergy is associated with recurrent otitis media during childhood. Acta Otolaryngol. 1999;119(8):867-73.]

**[624] Irritable bowel reactions to Nurofen and salicylates in food (February 2008)**

My son began getting diarrhoea and severe stomach pains from tomatoes and other high salicylate foods upon introduction of these foods from 6 months. My GP wasn't concerned about my son having constant foaming revolting smelling poo for three months but I certainly was! Thank you for your wonderful website which helped us to sort out this problem. He has shown similar reactions to salicylates in foods as he has to Nurofen – stomach pain that makes him scream for hours in agony and diarrhoea within 24 hours. This was when he was quite younger and we now know better than to give it to him. – Kate, by email

**[563] IBS: colostomy for 11-month-old baby (May 2007) SHARED COURAGE AWARD STORY FOR MAY 2007 NEWSLETTER**

In reply to the Reader's Story [537] in the last newsletter about salicylate intolerance misdiagnosed as Irritable Bowel Syndrome, our story started 5 years ago. We have fraternal twins who were born at 37 weeks and seemingly healthy at the time, no problems within the pregnancy was diagnosed in regular scans or when they were born. My first clue, looking back, that twin 2 may not be all right was her failure to use her bowel until day 3. I remember her gagging on day 1 and being told by the nurse that this was common in newborns until they had their first motion.

We then continued on a very long path during her first twenty-one months of life with an unsettled baby. Both twins were breast feed however twin 2 was always unsettled. At 6 months we decided to introduce solids - starting out with farex and progressing to adding small amounts of pureed fruits, ie pear, apple, etc 'all the safe ones'. To our shock twin 2 started to get the most horrible nappy rash with excoriation and bleeding. We couldn't understand it and were regular with her nappy changes, we also noticed that she would strain whenever she tried to use her bowel. We went to see her Paediatrician who prescribed hydrozole cream and amoxil drops, suggested we try some small amounts of vegetables and sent us on our way.

Four months had passed and we were increasingly worried for our daughter who still suffered from the terrible nappy rash and constant visible straining when using her bowel (most unusual in a baby) and was generally unsettled. By now we had tried cows' formula (which resulted in vomiting) and soy formula (which resulted in diarrhea) and we had also noticed that with fruits the problem was worse. Things didn't improve and after many calls and visits to our GP and Paediatrician we decided to see another Paediatrician.

The next Paediatrician suggested we trial a prescribed formula for 2 weeks of 'Alfare'. This resulted in violent vomiting and trip back to him whereby an ultrasound was performed and we were informed that she in fact had chronic constipation, with a large mass in her colon. Our daughter was now 11 months-old and had to have immediate surgery to remove the mass which resulted in her having a colostomy for 3 months.

We were assured by the Paediatric Surgeon that in fact her problems were not food related and that she was born with an 'anorectal anomaly' and that all would be ok once the colostomy was reversed. To our disappointment as soon as the colostomy was reversed we went straight back to the problems of severe nappy rash and excoriation on her full diet. Our daughter at 15 months was then seen by a Professor at the hospital who diagnosed disaccharidase deficiency (sucrose intolerance) to be the cause of the excoriation and unsettled behaviour; not the case.

Somehow eventually after breaking down many times and a visit again to our GPs rooms in desperation we were finally sent with a referral to the RPA Allergy Clinic (daughter 21months old). This was like a dream come true, they did a skin prick test for allergies; which showed no positive reactions (as suspected it would be by the clinic Paediatrician). We were then talked through food intolerances and naturally occurring chemicals in foods which caused intolerances in some people! The evidence was there in front of us and we couldn't believe it we finally had answers. Our daughter is now a healthy 6.5 year old, on a low salicylate and mainly low chemical diet who continues to thrive and hasn't looked back. We do trial new foods occasionally and are starting to add small amounts of moderate salicylates to her diet and some dairy (her main drink is now rice milk). We know straight away if she has overloaded as this results in usually loose motions or not being able to control her motions. For us the evidence is overwhelming and we are just very grateful we have our daughter and we can now give her answers and solutions so that she continues to enjoy good health and happiness. - by email.

#### **[550] IBS: 'nice, big, healthy bowel' needed dietary modification (May 2007)**

I have been aware of the RPAH diet for over 10 years and largely stuck to it during that time to help with symptoms of MS (multiple sclerosis). I have also suffered bowel issues for many years, predominately constipation but sometimes diarrhoea. My symptoms primarily include bloating, constipation and terrible pain. Initially, I thought it was the cause of my MS (bowel and bladder disturbance can be a problem) so just figured I had to live with it. When my lower bowel pain became quite severe - particularly after eating wheat and despite being failsafe - I decided to consult my GP again. She referred me to a gastroenterologist who preceded to do a colonoscopy to see if some inflammatory bowel disease was present and an endoscopy so she could take a biopsy and take a definite diagnosis on whether I had Coeliac disease or not.

Fortunately, all my results came back clear and the gastro told me that after examination she concluded that I had a 'nice big healthy bowel' (I guess that's a compliment to the gastro fraternity!) As she had eliminated all other possible diseases, she further concluded that I simply had IBS which has no real treatment. She said that dietary modification could help however, and referred me to a bowel dietician.

The dietician explained to me about fructans (a natural sugar) found in the onion family, wheat, chicory and asparagus. Having been failsafe, I knew about the amine and salicylate intolerance I have but thought that eliminating fructans could help considering I found leeks, spring onions and wheat appeared to affect me despite them all being failsafe and despite my not having Coeliacs. This all really helped so now I have refined my diet again and have eliminated all the trigger food chemicals (MSG, Salicylates, Amines) as well as fructans (leeks, spring onions, wheat, asparagus). This has

helped my IBS greatly. I am now just trying to give up percolated coffee every morning as that appears to trigger IBS symptoms. This fructans information may just be another piece of the puzzle for some people who suffer IBS. – by email.

**[549] IBS: “strict gluten free diet for 9 months with no improvement” (May 2007)**

In reply to the Reader’s Story [537] about salicylate intolerance misdiagnosed as Irritable Bowel Syndrome, in June 2004 I was referred to a gastroenterologist in with symptoms of IBS to check for coeliac disease. I had had IBS symptoms for 15 years. I also had a SIGA (immunoglobulin A) deficiency which made diagnosis of coeliac from blood tests more difficult; and lots of other symptoms not connected with digestive tract including fatigue, recurrent sinusitis, joint/muscle pain, skin rashes and urticaria. I had a gastroscopy and biopsy and two pathologists reports were both positive for Coeliac disease, although the gastroenterologist was not sure that the tissue changes were completely typical of coeliac. I was diagnosed with coeliac disease and followed a very strict gluten-free diet for 9 months with no improvement in my symptoms and was eventually given a blood test checking for gene markers HLA-DQ2/8. The results were negative and made coeliac a very very unlikely diagnosis.

In May 2005 the gastroenterologist finally referred me to a dietician to do the RPAH elimination diet and we discovered that removing salicylates and preservatives from my diet improved most of my symptoms. He must have been aware of the possibility that IBS symptoms could be related to preservatives and other food chemicals. The help that I got from the dietician put me on the right track but the Food Intolerance Network website, Sue Dengate’s books and the RPAH cookbook were much more helpful in providing detailed information about foods and food chemicals and managing the diet. The dietician did not refer me to those resources but I found out by doing my own homework and searching on the internet – 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.

**[537] Is there anyone else with salicylate intolerance misdiagnosed as Irritable Bowel Syndrome? (January 2007)**

I have completed the elimination diet and found that I have an intolerance to salicylates. My father is a gastroenterologist and when first had symptoms of this intolerance (stress, constipation, headaches, sinusitis etc) he thought it was Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). He referred me to his colleague, who also stated the diagnosis was IBS. Both of these gastroenterologists never considered that the problem may be related to diet, and they didn't even know what salicylates were! I might add that both of them are very professional doctors and have both been head of the gastroenterology department at hospital - so you would think they would know something about it. It took my dad a long time to recognise that salicylates exist - I had to show him websites and papers

that linked it to behavioural problems for him to really believe me. He just thought I was on some crazy diet and that there was no real basis to it!

My concern is this – that there are many people out there, particularly young women, who may have this food intolerance and be provided with the easy diagnosis of IBS. As you would be aware, an IBS diagnosis really doesn't help anyone because there isn't much you can do for it. And unless you keep searching for a solution (which I did, and my GP eventually came up with it) then you may never know you have an intolerance because salicylates are in everything!

Do you know of many other people who have been provided with an incorrect diagnosis for this food intolerance? I only know of one other person, and if there are more, then I think this should be brought to the attention of the national body for gastroenterologists. – by email [if you are in this category, please write to [suedengate@ozemail.com.au](mailto:suedengate@ozemail.com.au) with your story]

#### **[475] 635: Severe irritable bowel symptoms (June 2006)**

I knew I had food intolerances to the Nightshade family of foods so I had been avoiding them and my symptoms were much improved but even when I was sure I hadn't eaten any of them I would occasionally get severe sudden reactions: severe irritable bowel symptoms, a slight but very itchy rash and a severe feeling of nausea.

From looking at the responses on your website and finding a lady who said 635 in soups was the problem for her I went and checked the packaging of what I was eating and I realised flavour enhancer 635 was the common link for me. At the times I had sudden reactions I had been eating foods like Continental cuppa soups, packaged noodles, and beef stock, which all had 635 in them. Thanks for helping me find and kick this unhelpful additive out of my diet – Selina by email.

#### **[464] Food intolerance developed in an adult (November 2006)**

Seven years ago at the age of 55 I had a very nasty gastro-intestinal virus which led to CFS and IBS. Because of the severity of the IBS, I had many tests - some nasty, with scary implications. Finally, a very helpful dietitian (who works closely with the RPAH allergy unit) put me onto the elimination diet nearly 2 years ago. We have found that I have numerous intolerances: lactose, gluten, salicylates, amines, soy, MSG, sorbitol, sulphites, benzoates, annatto - to name a few.... – by email

#### **[398] Irritable bowel and weight problems at age 23 (March 2006)**

In 1997 at age 19, I developed an itchy, burning rash under my nose. For the next six years, I went to doctors, naturopaths, homoeopaths, meditation and relaxation. Nothing worked and no-one could tell me why it was there and what it was. In 2001 I gave up smoking and went through a lot in my life while living overseas and in 6 months went from 55kg to 72 kg. I started getting bowel problems (flatulence, constipation, cramps and diarrhoea) and no matter what I tried I could not lose the weight.

By the end of 2003 I had moved back to Australia and was on a wheat-free diet. My rash went away but I was still having bowel problems and irritability. Sometimes I would buckle over in so much pain

I couldn't walk, have terrible wind and then diarrhoea. I always needed to be near a toilet. That is when I went on the elimination diet and found that I was incredibly sensitive to sulphites and that the cramps and diarrhoea were from sulphites. The bad wind was caused by amines, and artificial antioxidants were a mixture of the two. My rash is staying away too. I am also back down to 55kg after coming back to Australia, going off wheat but also enjoying the active Australian lifestyle. I can now eat wheat as long as it has no preservatives - maybe it was never wheat that was the problem!

I am now only just on the other side of finishing the diet and am trying to come to terms with what I can and cannot eat. I have been trying no added preservative wine, which is a lot better, but I still sometimes have a bit of a reaction. I am very sad about Amines, I love chocolate and I can't eat much at all, same with cheese. I just know that it is not worth having sulphites because the reaction is too bad. My family have now begun to take out additives in their diets too after hearing from me just how bad they are. It gets confusing talking about natural food chemicals and chemicals to other people, but eventually they understand. – by email

### **[382] 635: Irritable bowel symptoms (December 2005)**

A few weeks ago I started having a Continental Low Carb instant soup every day. I knew the 635 was in there, but thought I didn't react to it. BIG mistake. No doubt you're expecting a description of the rash and swelling. Yes, I did get those, but not until week 2.

In week 1 my stomach progressively got sicker and sicker. By the end of the week I could only lie on the lounge and visit the loo. The doctor diagnosed mild food poisoning that turned into a very nasty stomach bug. Antibiotics and no food for three days cleared the bug. So what did I do? I had a miso soup from a local Japanese restaurant. A few hours later my stomach started going odd again and I began to itch. By that night the typical 635 rash and unbearable itch had set in.

For some bizarre reason I didn't think of 635 with the miso. The next day I had one of those damn instant soups again and of course the same thing happened but worse.

Needless to say I have ditched the soup and banned 635. My son is actually quite pleased because one of the things that make him itch makes Mummy itch, so he feels a little less alone about it. The itch and rash have gone, but my lips are still very dry and cracked. But I have LEARNT MY LESSON! – Megan NSW.

### **[368] One liners (March 2005)**

I have osteo-arthritis which is much less painful if I adhere to the diet – if I inadvertently eat something that upsets me, I become overwhelmingly weary, my arthritis flares up and I can get bloating and irritable bowel symptoms. I often say in jest, "I cheat! I pay!" – by email

### **[356] One-liners (Nov 2004)**

- Our three and a half year old son is a lovely child with a few difficulties when on failsafe food but before diet, he had enough symptoms to class him as autistic: little or no eye contact, spent hours alone fixated with various objects ie string, sand, wouldn't accept hugs or show affection, constant tantrums, his development regressed a lot from about 18 months or 2 years with regard to loss of

speech, and for quite a while he said only one word repetitively, as well as severe reflux, diarrhoea, eczema and sleep disturbance. – Qld

**[312] Naturopathic way makes us sicker (April 2004)**

I have been using your book like a bible for my four-year-old and have had wonderful success. Without it I don't think our family would have survived. Our little boy has salicylate sensitivity and is also affected by a lot of preservatives and colours. He previously suffered from severe bloating, diarrhoea and stomach cramps which are controlled with this diet. His severe rages and tantrums also went away almost instantly when we started failsafe eating. My son is very grateful because he doesn't like having stomach cramps. He said to me one day when he was only three, 'Mummy what are we going to do about my tummy, it really hurts' and that was when I found your book.

I am a nutritionist and have studied through natural health colleges. I have found that trying to help my son and myself the naturopathic way only makes us much sicker, as you stated in your book. Damien cannot take vitamins or eat lots of fruit and vegetables. - Karen England, NSW.

**[302] Toddler diarrhoea and unmanageable behaviour (December 2003)**

My 2yr old has had chronic diarrhoea for 5 months. Before that, his stools have always fluctuated. Along with the diarrhoea, he gets a spotty rash on his face, throws things, hits, kicks, screams and is generally unmanageable. When he eats certain things like commercial bread and wheat products, the next day he poos water. I had him back and forth to doctors who treated me like I was an idiot. Finally we were sent to a pediatrician who ordered blood tests and stool analyses. When the results came back, he told me there was nothing wrong with him, he just had toddler diarrhoea and told me to put him on half an immodium tablet a day to fix his diarrhoea. Because I was getting no joy from doctors and my son was getting sicker daily, I took him off wheat, dairy and most sugars. He slowly started to improve, but it wasn't good enough. I now have him on a full elimination diet, no wheat, gluten or lactose, salicylates, amines and glutamates. He started improving straightaway (only one water poo in the first five days which was a miracle).

We're still waiting to see a gastrointestinal pediatrician, but other doctors have told me he wouldn't have an intolerance to things. I know he does because the change is dramatic, and even his behaviour has improved. He seems to react to salicylates, it's amazing to read these things when you've noticed something but didn't understand it. My five-year-old son has improved too and when he breaks the diet he says he feels "like his brain wants to puke". I hope more health professionals will become aware of the damage additives and other food chemicals can cause. - Vicky, Victoria

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

Right from the minute she was born my daughter Laura was a nightmare. She screamed and screamed and screamed some more. I went around the twist. I had two children under two and it was hard to be up all night with this child and then carry her around all day. The minute I sat her down she would start screaming. I spoke to clinic sisters, doctors, friends and all gave me various degrees of advice. I kept saying that Laura is reacting to my breastmilk but was laughed at and told

that that wasn't possible. I now know that I was right and the bread that I was consuming was giving this poor child a huge bellyache.

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

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

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

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

#### **[244] Effects of MSG (April 2003)**

I have worked out that my son's bad behaviour is all due to added MSG. He is OK on cheese and other natural MSG products - but give him a KFC chicken nugget packet and their chicken salt chips with the so called "secret herbs and spices" and you can see the reaction within 30 to 60 minutes. I'm not surprised as I get very similar reactions with MSG although my reaction is different to my son's behavioural reactions. I have Irritable Bowel and my reaction to MSG is to have a bad IBS attack. Sometimes I get an almost "high on drugs" feeling where my skin starts to crawl. - reader, email

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

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

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

Secondly, I developed a very irritable bowel in my early forties. Trying a rotation diet showed that commercial sliced bread caused severe constipation. Other foods, obtained from the delicatessen, also caused overwhelming sleepiness, headaches and bouts of stomach aches and malaise. It is now so bad that eating any commercial bread or products such as commercial schnitzels, causes an attack which is characterised by bowel cramps, pain, burning sensations in the gut, nausea, headache and muscle spasms in my neck, back and legs. It usually takes three days of fasting, or a rice diet, before the symptoms subside. My medical advisers would never take seriously my claim that bread, cakes and pastries were associated with the problem, although I underwent food challenges under the direction of a respected dietician. Semolina and some home made bread does not cause me any problems. The received view still seems to be that there is a psychiatric component to irritable bowel syndrome, especially as it seems a majority of women are diagnosed with this disorder! Consequently, there is little sympathy for the sufferer, and no treatment other than antispasmodics and anti-flatulence drugs.

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

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

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

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

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

#### **[149] Taking back control through diet (April 2002)**

"I came across your book by accident and decided to do the elimination diet before considering drugs for our son, as I have been on drugs for years myself for ADD associated with Tourette's Syndrome. As it turns out, I react VERY strongly to amines. We've only tested salicylates and amines so far. I have been able to reduce my medication by half. It's early days yet, as we've only been on the diet for 32 days and I daren't get my hopes up too much. My son didn't react to salicylates or amines. He is much calmer on the diet; certainly not in need of medication. We already know he can't tolerate gluten, as he has had a lifetime of diarrhea until he went off it. It's exciting to be able to take back some control of one's life through diet." - by email

#### **[145] Bloating, constipation and flatulence from gluten intolerance (February 2002)**

"Thank you from my family. It was because of Fed Up that we identified our gluten intolerance. My husband has lost the dark circles under his eyes, no longer suffers bloating, constipation and flatulence, and has a lot more energy. My 18-year-old son has no mouth ulcers for the first time in his life. And on a very serious note, we couldn't check out my husband's family history because they are all deceased. Bowel cancer through two generations that we know of. One of his cousins under 40 years old had polyps removed. I've read that untreated gluten intolerance increases the risk of bowel cancer by 40-100 times. This is a lot more serious than 'smelling sweeter'!"

**[125] "To say I felt better would have been the understatement of a new millenium" (September 2001)**

Around February of 2000 I was searching on the internet for some clues to my life long digestive problems, when I came across the food allergy section on the About.com website. The featured food allergy topic happened to be salicylates ... just out of curiosity, and for the heck of it, I clicked on the link, and started to read about it ... I first off read the list of common symptoms. As I read it the list was all to familiar to me ... I answered Yes to every symptom. Needless to say, I started to follow a salicylate free diet. To say I felt better would have been the understatement of a new millenium..... ALL of my life I have suffered from Very frequent urination, constipation, stomach bloating, short temper, irritability, inability to concentrate, memory problems, severe acne, dry skin (especially on my hands and feet), those restless legs, and more ...<sigh>... The worst of it for me though was the constant urination, and constipation which led to a lot of gas ... Thank you so much for your work, and your book. Both have changed my life forever. I am finally free of a problem which has literally ruined my life. In case you're wondering, I'm 37 years old ... And yes, 36 years is WAY too long to suffer with this health problem. Sometimes I don't know how I made it this long with my sanity intact. - from the USA

**[102] An adult success story - irritable bowel and weight loss (August 2001)**

Around the middle of last year I realised that I was always tired, my workmates commented on my sneezing fits every afternoon, I was very irritable, easily reduced to tears, had rashes on my legs, an ear infection which would not clear up and generally felt unwell. But worst of all was my bloated stomach, which most times looked like I was 7 months pregnant, and the related bowel problems. Looking back I had been gradually getting worse for a couple of years.

I had been to my doctor a couple of times for other things and always mentioned the vague symptoms. I was told not to worry. As the bowel problems persisted I started to worry as my grandfather had died of colon cancer. A Rotary test was negative but I still worried. I went to my doctor again and although she agreed that the bloated stomach was unusual she could find nothing wrong. However, she realised that I was really starting to worry about cancer, so she suggested I have some tests, just to set my mind at rest. I had an abdominal scan and full blood tests. Nothing wrong. But my worry was increasing, so she sent me for a colonoscopy, warning me that it would be unpleasant.

That was my turning point. The specialist could not understand my mixed reactions when he told me there was nothing wrong. However, I had had the colonoscopy on a Monday so had arranged to also have Tuesday off work as I imagined I would still feel pretty awful a day later. I woke up on Tuesday feeling fantastic. I packed so much into that one day it was amazing. I also did not eat, as I so much enjoyed feeling "empty". I wondered whether my symptoms were being caused by something I was eating.

Coincidentally, I had recently read an article in Australian Good Taste, about food intolerance, and your book was recommended. I bought your book and realised that all my symptoms fitted the pattern. I even had belatedly-diagnosed giardia for several weeks a couple of years before. I went back to the doctor, and suggested I go on an elimination diet. She was very lukewarm about the idea

but I was determined so I followed your instructions and went on the strict diet for several weeks. I tried the

challenges and narrowed my causes down to dairy and salicylates (both of which I had normally in large quantities). I then got caught up in a round of end of year work functions and lunches, so I was not able to be so strict with myself. I went backwards quickly.

Now I avoid all processed foods, eat failsafe at home, and make informed choices when out. I love wine but have cut down to a couple of glasses per week, have decaf coffee, soy milk etc. The result has been a new zest for life - new role at work, back to studying part time and lots of activities. I'm back to size 12 clothes (have bought lots of new ones). I turn 50 next week and feel like 40.

I'm a bit evangelical when I tell people why I've lost so much weight, so I don't mind you sharing my story if it is of interest to others. Thanks again for providing the tools for me to get my life back. –  
NSW

**[101] "What an experience that was! - irritable bowel, sneaky poos, restless legs, eczema, behaviour" (August 2001)**

I contacted a dietitian through our Base hospital and with their help we managed to get through the Elimination Diet. What an experience that was! My youngest son, Tim, who is three in April, had been given an uncertain diagnosis of "Irritable Bowel???" by the pediatrician. We were told to take him off lactose, sugar and soy and reduce the fruit intake. That has little effect on his symptoms. So, Brandon (5 yo), Tim and I embarked on the Elimination Diet. My husband did not want to be involved in the "witchcraft" as he called it!

I was on the phone to the dietitian after 36 hours because Brandon, who had behaviour problems, had got 10 times worse where behaviour was concerned and had come out in an eczema-type rash on his torso and upper arms. I felt he was reacting to the soy or the cashew paste (but probably the soy) as these were the only new additions to our diet. I was told to "persevere, that reactions usually got worse before they improved". After 5 days I had a great improvement in my mucous volume and felt better than I had in 5 years. After 4 weeks we had seen limited improvement in Brandon's behaviour and no improvement in Tim's symptoms so decided to eliminate wheat as well.

The results were quite amazing. After 2 weeks off wheat I realized my restless legs were no longer worrying me and Brandon's sneaky poos had ceased to be a problem. Tim's symptoms improved but his bowel motions never really came back to normal. We did the wheat challenge first. Brandon was OK for 5 days but on the 6th day he obviously went over the threshold and took a full week to recover. He reacted with restless legs (which I have since discovered can happen after even a few cracker biscuits) and Tim also had a worsening of his diarrhoea.

The dairy challenge was interesting - my mucous symptoms were worse but Brandon improved in behaviour almost overnight and after 3 days the eczema was gone! So I was right about the soy after all.

... Brandon reacted to salicylates as I suspected he would, I didn't. The amine challenge was a disaster! We should never both have done that at the same time. Brandon and I both reacted and

our symptoms were the same and severe - aggressive behaviour with a lack of self-control, depression etc. It was like world war three in our house by the end of the week and both of us took at least a week to recover. I have read in a number of places that if we react to amines then we probably react to other additives so we have not continued with separate challenges for these. We just avoid them.

Initially I was daunted by the difficulties I faced accessing the foods we need but eventually as I learn where in the supermarket, health food store etc to find things life has become much easier ... I remember a quote in "Fed Up" from a lady who said she spent more time in the kitchen but less time disciplining the children and I have found that to be absolutely true. It is now just the way we live. I find the most difficult thing now is other people's reactions to our diet. Some of our friends though come to our place with 7UP and kettle chips to share. Thankfully my husband is now more supportive and even grudgingly admits that he is probably reacting to some foods himself. So, Sue we have come a long way in these last 6 months. I hope it makes you proud to know that your writing of "Fed Up" has contributed to such an improvement in our lives. - Qld

**[041] "improved within one day" (May 2000)**

I would like to let you know that within one day of removing the following from my sons diet, all of which he ate on a daily basis in large quantities, he had started to change noticeably: chocolate flavouring, chicken roll, preserved bread (282), cheese slices, tomato sauce. For a long time people had asked me why my son didn't have constipation when he consumes copious amounts of milk and up to 24 slices of cheese at a time, as well as up to six Fruche in a sitting! I was amazed to find that his motions have changed considerably since removing the above items! He is still having large amounts of milk but I think I may have to exclude this too if his shiners don't disappear. - Reader, by email

**[034] Chronic fatigue (January 2000)**

I am 23 years old and I have had Chronic Fatigue Syndrome for two years now. I thought I was never going to get better. It seemed the healthier I thought I ate (lots of fruits and veges!) the sicker I became and the more weight I lost, along with many other symptoms including headaches, muscle soreness and weakness, bowel disorders. You name it I experienced it! At my lowest weight I was 32kg which was a total loss of 30kg. After being an elite athlete I can assure you this was very frustrating.

It was only when my fantastic doctor happened to come across another patient who had the same problems as me that he was pointed in the direction of the allergy clinic at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital.

Through a dietitian there I was put on the FAILSAFE diet and dramatically improved within two days. Even though this meant that I only ate fish, rice and chicken for four months I didn't mind because I no longer had stomach pains. I am now able to tolerate most foods on the low list although not dairy or gluten. That may not sound like much but to me I can eat a huge variety compared to what I started out with.

I have managed to put on 12 kg and am almost ready to return to a bit of part time work! I can honestly say that this diet saved my life. - Emma, Sydney

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