

Reader reports from the Food Intolerance Network

www.fedup.com.au

("stutter" keyword only)

[1234] One-liners (October 2013)

Sue's book has been really helpful with our 2.5 year old boy. He was developing a stutter and drawn out speech impediment, but since we have changed his diet, it seems to have rectified the situation. It is alarming to learn that this was caused by foods - Ryan by email

[991] Speech: Diet got rid of disfluency and stutter (March 2011)

My 5 year old son has suffered from disfluency in his speech since he started to speak! He was an early speaker, and was putting sentences together very early, but would always talk in a very monotone evenly paced voice, a trait we are now told is quite common with kids who have auditory processing issues. We have recently had him diagnosed with a 'severe' figure ground problem. [the louder the background noise, the more trouble he has in processing what he hears - his actual hearing is perfect] I put 'severe' in italics, because he was tested at a time where he was not baseline; at a time where other factors were in play. Both the audiologist and the speech pathologist had other explanations for the stutter, which was most common at the beginning of sentences. Once he got started, the speech was more fluent, but still monotone.

The speech pathologist said his brain was moving faster than his tongue. He had an amazing grasp of language at an early age and his tongue would catch up with time. We discussed techniques in 'smooth talking' and 'bumpy talking', but aside from that the advice was that he would grow out of it.

The audiologist said that the processing difficulty could be linked to the stuttering as a delaying tactic while the rest of the information becomes accessible.

I don't disagree with these experts, but as time has gone on, I am convinced that other factors are more responsible for these symptoms than either of the explanations above.

We noticed, over time, that sometimes his stutter was worse than other times. A noisy environment always made things worse, supporting the figure ground hearing assessment, but at other times there seemed to be no obvious contributor. Tiredness, we thought? Perhaps new developmental stages?

We had already suspected that colours and preservatives made him 'high' and had eliminated all of those anyway. I made most things from scratch and bought very little processed food.

In about April of this year, we happened upon the 'Fed Up' information. We had just had about 3-4 weeks of hell at home. I was tearing my hair out and the tension in our house with the behavioural problems was unbelievable. His stutter was so bad, that it would take him 3-4 minutes to get through a simple sentence. I was trying to be patient and not draw attention to it as the speech pathologist had told us, but it was not only driving me mad, but for the first time, it was really

bothering him. " Mu..Mu...Mu...Mu...Mum..... l....ll....l....l.... wa....wa. wa...wa..... Uh, what was I saying mum? " If I'd put in every stutter, it would take up more than a page! Upon reading various fact sheets on the website, I had an epiphany! I had put dried apricots in his lunchboxes for the 2 kinder days and 1 day care day a week for about the last 3-4 weeks. Just 3-4 each time, but I cut them out immediately while I kept researching.

Within 4-5 days of removing apricots [and no other changes], the stutter had improved, but was still apparent. After another week, other people started noticing the improvement.

That was the beginning. While the stutter had not vanished at this point, it was enough to make me convinced that there was something to all this 'intolerance stuff'. We got more serious, and finally started to see the gorgeous little boy that we knew was in there somewhere. The aggression all but disappeared, the frustration and the stutter were much improved but there were still times where things would go downhill again.

After hearing Sue talk, I decided to get much more serious, and undertook the complete elimination diet, including the elimination of dairy and wheat. Prior to starting, I spent about 2 weeks trying recipes, building up my pantry items, stocking the freezer etc. I believe that if I had not done that, I might have given up, fallen in a heap and put it all in the too hard basket. The changes in the household were amazing. I was spending a couple of hours extra in the kitchen every day, but with the elimination of wheat [I am convinced] I had the extra energy to do it. A week in, and his stutter had all but disappeared. It was as if he had suddenly grown up an extra year or two. He took adversity in his stride, he shrugged his shoulders instead of clenching his fists, and any remaining disfluency in speech I felt was because of habit rather than anything else. His voice became more interesting, his pitch patters varied and I am sure that he coped with noisy situations better. All of the 'autistic' tendencies which we had seen for years were improved. He read social cues better, spent much less time with his fingers in his mouth, coped with loud noises better; generally it was an amazing difference. His kinder teacher, who has watched this process with interest, remarked that it almost looked as if we had sedated him!

We are lucky in a way, to have a son who reacts so quickly and obviously to things. It makes identifying problems a lot easier. During our salicylate challenge, he went off the chart for silliness, and the stutter got worse. During a course of antibiotics for a bad bacterial skin infection, he got aggressive, angry ... and the stutter got worse. Every time we have slipped up with food, the stutter gets worse. It is our main indicator that something is amiss.

I have no absolute proof. I am not a scientist. I am not a speech pathologist. I am a mum - plain and simple. But I know my boy. I know who he is and who he isn't and these past 7 months I have watched him like a hawk. I know when he is up and I know when he is down. And I am absolutely convinced that his disfluency is directly connected with his diet. I am not saying that the diet is fully responsible, but added to other issues that he has, the diet is what has made the difference for him. A year ago, I was so worried that when he starts school next year, he would be teased because of his stutter. Now, I know that while we will always face issues with diet and behaviour, at least at baseline, he won't be that different from any other child.

And of course, I will be eternally grateful to Sue, and all who contribute to the Fed Up website. Without it, life would be a great deal more difficult. The one thing I am thankful for, is that I never let things go. If I had just listened to the experts and not used my brain and my intuition, then who knows....- Kylie, by email

[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.]

[577] Motor tics related to amines (chocolate) and additives (lollies) (September 2007)

We have been following the diet for several years and we have seen the positive effects a failsafe diet has on our hyperactive 6 year old daughter. She does have trouble with expressive language and has been having therapy for a year. If she eats something eg a chocolate or lollies for several days, she starts to stutter really badly and she also makes "jerking" movements with her body. - by email

[397] Stuttering related to preservatives and salicylates (March 2006)

My 9 year old son started stuttering when he was around 4 years old. He seemed to be sensitive to preservatives especially 211 and I have steered clear of this preservative, but a few weeks ago his stuttering came back in full force, around the same time I had apple juice in the house. He is a big juice addict, and thinking back, has always had juice, either straight or diluted. I have always watched out for the preservatives in juice, and bread, but I now think he is intolerant to salicylates as well. I have changed all of his foods to failsafe foods, and his speech is now good. He has calmed down a bit as well.

[396] Nitrates (249-252) used in preserved meats such as ham, bacon and hotdogs affect stuttering (March 2006)

Our two and a half year old son had difficulty with stuttering for a few months. After my sister-in-law, a nurse, told us about the potential dangers of nitrates for children, especially contributions to developmental delays, we removed all nitrates from our son's diet and within about a week the stuttering was gone. Yesterday, our son went on an outing to the zoo with my mother. Strangely, his stuttering returned full-force today. I called my mother to ask what he had ingested for lunch and dinner yesterday. The glaring answer: a HOTDOG.

[395] Mashed potato challenge and stutter (March 2006)

Sulphites (220-228) are used in a wide range of foods including dried fruit, fruit drinks, sausages (not in meat in the USA) and potato products such as hot chips and dried potato. We did the sulphite challenge with Deb mashed potato. My son was stuttering slightly before the challenge but by day 3 of eating ½ cup of Deb mashed potato per day, his stuttering was so bad that he would not talk at all. His stuttering continued for 4 months after the challenge stopped. Two years later he has had no sulphites and no speech difficulties.

[394] Benzoates in medication and stutter (March 2006)

My daughter is allergic to mosquitoes and while we were doing the elimination diet she was badly bitten. Our doctor recommended daily double doses of claratyne liquid. On the second day my daughter started to talk incessantly and stutter a little (this had previously been a problem months ago). Then on day 3 at daycare she became drunkish, socially withdrawn and stopped talking (selective mutism, although not gone, had improved on failsafe). The staff at daycare had been amazed to say the least about her improvement on the diet, so this was obvious. When my husband came home, he picked up the bottle of antihistamine and read the label, to my dismay it contained sodium benzoate! Well, that went in the bin, we got claratyne tablets, she had a half, and the next day at daycare she was back to normal.

[393] All of the common suspects affect stutter (March 2006)

My son becomes hyper and stutters as a result of reactions to salicylates, amines, wheat, dairy, preservatives, colours and flavours. His older sister also stutters when reacting but she is more tolerant of foods and other reactions are milder.

[392] Stuttering and behaviour are different reactions to the same foods (March 2006)

My 7 year old son has been failsafe for a couple of years now with great results. My 5 year old daughter has quite a bad stutter and it has just dawned on me that diet may make it worse. I have often noticed that her speech is worse when my son's behaviour is at its worst. Her speech therapist pointed out that it may be due to diet and that his hyperactivity is the symptom but her symptom is stuttering. Given that they both generally eat the same thing this makes sense. I tend to be more lax with her diet though.

[352] 'So much calmer' (Nov 2004)

First of all let me tell you how wonderful it was to find your website and help our 4 1/2 year old son (and the rest of us) lead a much more 'normal' life. He's had horrible symptoms of terrible mood swings, off and on stuttering, biting, spitting, banging his head against the wall, excessive bedwetting, an extremely loud voice that he couldn't control, big 'saucer' eyes with clenched teeth while running at me to kick and bite me, would go into hysterics when I would ask him to do the simplest of tasks such as dressing himself, pulling his hair hard enough to yank it out of head (and his 14 month old sister's), screaming every name at me he knew, running behind me from across the room gaining momentum to head butt me as hard as he could in the back and spine and as we give him a much needed nap during the day he can't fall asleep until 11:00 pm or midnight!

I've ordered your book but until it arrives I've been making some really wonderful meals and snacks for my son just from the info on your website... Since introducing the new diet, he's been basically a new, happier little boy and the mood around the house is SO MUCH CALMER. - USA

[262] Stuttering (June 2003)

Our latest mistake was when our son was given a "special treat" of a glass of orange juice by his well-meaning grandparents. Aaaaaargh. I have noticed since then his speech has gotten worse, but improves once we give him some bicarb soda (mixed with golden syrup) as an antidote. We noticed his speech worsened when we did the salicylate challenge. The speech problems come into play when he is hyper, which is days 1-2 post salicylate and slowly improves from there. - by email

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