Foods and additives are common causes of the attention deficit hyperactive disorder in children.

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The attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) is a neurophysiologic problem that is detrimental to children and their parents. Despite previous studies on the role of foods, preservatives and artificial colorings in ADHD this issue remains controversial.

This investigation evaluated 26 children who meet the criteria for ADHD. Treatment with a multiple item elimination diet showed 19 children (73%) responded favorably, P < .001.

On open challenge, all 19 children reacted to many foods, dyes, and/or preservatives. A double-blind placebo controlled food challenge (DBPCFC) was completed in 16 children.

There was a significant improvement on placebo days compared with challenge days (P = .003). Atopic children with ADHD had a significantly higher response rate than the nonatopic group.

This study demonstrates a beneficial effect of eliminating reactive foods and artificial colors in children with ADHD. Dietary factors may play a significant role in the etiology of the majority of children with ADHD.