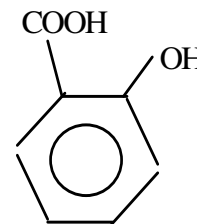


Salicylates

Salicylates [Sa-Lis'-uh-Lates] comprise a group of compounds made by plants as protection against insects and disease. Salicylates are chemically related to aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid). There are several types, such as sodium salicylate, methyl salicylate, ethyl salicylate, aluminum acetyl salicylate, ammonium salicylate, etc. The salicylates to be eliminated can be found in some fruits and a few vegetables, and are used for flavor, aroma, or preservatives in some foods, medications, cosmetics, and other non-food items. Anyone allergic to aspirin may feel better when also eliminating salicylate-containing foods and products.



Stage One of the Feingold Program eliminates those salicylates identified as the most troublesome. After a favorable response is seen, salicylate-containing products may be carefully reintroduced, one at a time, to determine if there is a problem with any or all of them.

Feingold Association members report wide variation in salicylate sensitivity, as well as a cumulative effect and a more dramatic reaction when combined with synthetic additives. Some can eat salicylates freely, while others can occasionally tolerate small amounts of a favorite salicylate food if they are otherwise stable on Stage One of the Program. For those who are more sensitive than usual, a comprehensive set of tables of known salicylate food sources is included in Program materials, based on a 1985 study of Australian foods.¹ This study considered quantity alone, with no thought of the relative toxicity of various kinds of salicylate. More study is urgently needed, but this is the best information that is currently available.

Environmental Chemicals

Artificially colored, flavored, scented, or preserved non-food items can also cause a reaction when inhaled or absorbed through the skin. The Feingold Program will help you find household and personal care items less likely to cause symptoms. Although the Program does not address the issue of pesticides directly, some members report symptom improvement when pesticides in food and the environment are avoided.

Pesticides

The National Academy of Science reports “neurotoxic and behavioral effects may result from low-level chronic exposure to some organophosphate and carbamate pesticides.” As long ago as April 1991, the United States government report, *Neurotoxicity: Identifying and Controlling Poisons for the Nervous System* stated that everyone is at risk of being harmed by these chemicals, but the highest risk groups are fetuses, children, and the elderly.

Pesticides used outside the home are easily tracked inside and are readily inhaled and absorbed through the skin. Children are at high risk of exposure since they are more likely to crawl on the floor and play in the grass and on the school playground.

Nevertheless, a main route of chronic exposure is through the diet, and eating organic foods as often as possible makes a measurable difference.²

Perfumes

Today, fragrances are made primarily from petroleum, and can be just as harmful as petroleum-based food additives. When inhaled, they go directly to the brain, where they can trigger an immediate reaction. Fragrances applied to the skin are also absorbed systemically.



Various chemicals commonly used in perfumes, cleaning supplies – and even children’s toys – have been shown to cause adverse effects in animals, including: inhibition of motor activity, respiratory tract irritation, narcotic effects when inhaled, hyperactivity, irritability, liver damage, spasms and death; and, in humans: marked eye, nose, or throat irritation, numbness of fingers and arms.³ **Fragrances are not under FDA regulation and are not required to be tested for safety.** If not tested by the manufacturer, there is supposed to be a note put on the label to that effect. This requirement also is not monitored by anyone.⁴

1. Swain 1985
2. Lu 2006

3. Spencer 1984
4. FDA information via phone calls by this author in 2003, and verified in 2004 and 2007.