



Additives-Flavours- Colours (AFC)

An AFC-Free Diet Guide.

Some tips for implementing an AFC-Free diet:

Food additives are compounds used to improve the flavour or appearance of a food. You won't find them in natural wholefoods, and they have no nutritional value.

Food additives are added to:

- Prolong shelf life
- Sweeten a food
- Alter the colour
- Prevent clumping or clotting of ingredients
- Change the texture
- Maintain acid and moisture levels

A healthy child is less likely to react to food additives. Kids with health challenges can be more sensitive, particularly those with:

- Neurological imbalances such as autism, sensory processing disorder and ADHD
- Immune imbalances such as allergies, intolerances, asthma and eczema
- Impaired gut health

If your child has a health condition, reducing and eliminating can make the world of difference to their behaviour, concentration and learning. That's why I recommend working with a practitioner who can look at the bigger picture and help you make the most effective changes.

Some tips for implementing an AFC-Free diet:

READ FOOD LABELS:

Don't take notice of the health claims on the front of a package. Instead, have a look at the ingredient list. Choose foods that have fewer numbers in the list, or preferably none at all. You also want to avoid chemical-sounding names.

Another trick is to avoid foods that have vitamins and minerals added. It might seem healthier, but they are usually added to low-nutrient, highly processed foods. A good rule of thumb is to choose foods with a short ingredient list.

CHOOSE PLAIN OVER FLAVOURED

If you want the kids to have a treat such as chips or corn chips, go for the plain variety. Flavoured options will usually contain more additives.

WATCH OUT FOR SWEETENED FOODS

If a product claims to be sugar-free, zero calorie or diet, check the back. This usually means it has low or no sugar, but it has sweeteners added to it. And often, the sweetener is worse than sugar itself!

Gum, lollies, yoghurt and soft drinks are just a few foods that can be sweetened artificially. Aspartame, sucralose and saccharine are the most common artificial sweeteners.

Some tips for implementing an AFC-Free diet:

LIMIT ARTIFICIALLY COLOURED FOOD AND DRINKS

Most mums know this because their kids go crazy after having them! But colours are added to things we don't even think about. For example, a chocolate bar with popping candy will have added colours. If you want to give your kids a treat, don't combine sugar with a heap of additives! Choose a plain variety instead.

GO FOR THE LEAST PROCESSED OPTION

A great example of this is cheese. A block of cheese won't have many additives, if any at all. But grated and sliced choices will have things like anti-caking agents added. It might not be as convenient, but grating and slicing your own cheese is a simple way to reduce additives. The same goes for meats. Ham is a convenient option, but it contains a lot of additives and preservatives. A healthier choice is to poach chicken breasts or cook a big roast, and use these in sandwiches.

FOCUS ON WHOLEFOODS

Finally, it's important to not just reduce the exposure to food additives and other toxins. You also want to build up your child's resistance to these compounds. The best way to achieve this is to increase their nutrient levels and support their gut and detoxification pathways. The way we do this is by focusing on a wholefood diet.

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COMMON FOODS THAT CONTAIN PROBLEMATIC ADDITIVES:

- Baked items; cakes, biscuits
- Confectionary
- Flavoured drinks; cordials, soft drinks, sports drinks
- Condiments such as barbecue sauce, pickles
- Bottled salad dressings
- Snack foods; chips, crackers, packet soup
- Preserved meats (e.g. hams, salami, bacon)

PRESERVATIVES TO AVOID:

- Sorbates (numbers 200-203)
- Benzoates (numbers 210-213)
- Sulphites (numbers 220-228)
- Nitrates, nitrites (numbers 249-252)
- Propionates (numbers 280-283)

FLAVOUR ENHANCERS TO AVOID:

- Glutamates (numbers 620-625)
- Ribonucleotides (numbers 627,631,635)
- Hydrolysed Vegetable Protein (HVP)
- Yeast Extract

ANTIOXIDANTS TO AVOID:

- Gallates (numbers 310-312)
- TBHQ, BHA, BHT (numbers 319-321)

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS TO AVOID:

- Aspartame (number 951)
- Saccharine (number 954)

COLOURS TO AVOID:

- 102, 104, 107, 110, 122, 123, 124, 127, 128, 129, 132, 133, 142, 143, 151, 155, 160b