Vitamin B Deficiency and Developmental Disorders

B Vitamins, Stuttering, and Temper Tantrums

My four-year-old grandson was a hyperactive fusser with a low melting point. He seemed to be going through the terrible twos at four. Nearly every time he was told to do something he didn't want to do, he shouted, "I don't want to!" and followed his outburst with ear-splitting wailing.

Coming from a counseling background, I was pretty sure where that behavior came from: inconsistent parenting, giving in to bad behavior. You know the immediate judgments that come to mind. But this was not the case. When I moved in with my son and his family, I witnessed my grandson's parenting first hand. More than that, I participated. No matter how consistent, no matter how calm and firm we were, the behavior continued. Worse than that, his inability to handle frustration was escalating.

One day, out of the blue, he began to stutter. Within a few days, it was full blown. "I…I…I…I wa… wa…want… to go." Sometimes the stutter was on both ends of the sentence. It didn't matter if he was having fun and playing or if he was calmly trying to relay information, the stutter took over his speech.

We'd always had bedtime difficulties and they were getting worse. It was hard to get him down, hard for him to go to sleep, and hard for him to stay asleep. Add to that the fact that when his eyes popped open in the morning, he shot out of bed no matter how long he had slept.

Having raised two hyperactive children, I knew the drill. Perfect diet. Lots of sleep. But these kids were eating an organic diet with loads of fresh fruits and veggies. But sleep? Him? Not so much. The hyperactivity itself was interfering with his sleep, and everyone else's.

When my hyperactive sons were young, B vitamins helped immensely. They helped all of us. They helped the kids sleep and they kept me from having a nervous breakdown. I discussed this with my son and his wife and we decided to give a B vitamin complex a try. We bought what we believe to be the best: Thorne Research's vitamins. No additives or fillers.

Within four days, the stuttering was reduced by half. Within six days, it stopped altogether. Bedtimes became manageable. Within two weeks we experienced the first no-fuss bedtime and a smiling child who was willing to raise his arms in the air to yell, "Yay, bedtime!"

Now I don't want to mislead anyone. It's two months later, and he still fusses. But what was once a roar is now a moan or a whimper and fussing only happens a few times a day instead of 25 or 30 times a day. Redirection or an occasion time out is handling the behavior just fine. He is sleeping much better. Meltdowns are a thing of the past and so is stuttering, even when he went without B vitamins for several weeks.

After this success, it occurred to me to google B vitamins and stuttering. I found that one small study had been done that showed a positive correlation. But there was very little info out there on the subject.

Editor's note: In a case like this, I recommended a good fat supplement in conjunction with high quality complex B vitamins. UDO's 3-6-9 with DHA is one of the best out there. A B vitamin deficiency in someone who is eating well and not consuming stimulants is likely to involve a fat imbalance as well.

Recommended Supplements:

- B-Complex #12 – Thorne Research
- Shillington’s Total Nutrition Formula

Further Reading:

- *B Vitamins, Nature’s Valium and So Much More*