

Survey Results: Nutraceuticals More Beneficial Than Pharmaceuticals for Autism

Researchers have found nutritional supplements have more positive benefits than pharmaceuticals on autism symptoms, with lower adverse effects.

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Autism researchers have found nutraceuticals (nutritional supplements) have more positive benefits than pharmaceuticals on autism spectrum disorder (ASD) symptoms, with lower adverse effects.

A study led by Professor James B. Adams, PhD of Arizona State University, published in the Journal of Personalized Medicine and shared with [Autism Parenting Magazine](#), provides key information on the benefits and adverse effects of 58 commonly-used nutraceuticals for ASD.



Nutritional supplements are often used to treat both core ASD symptoms and comorbidities, such as oxidative stress, mitochondrial dysfunction, and issues around diet/gut health, but some have not yet been formally evaluated for autism.

The [survey research](#) involved 1,286 participants from across the United States. It found overall benefits were rated higher for nutraceuticals than for the pharmaceuticals reported in a previous paper, with significantly lower adverse effects.

Participants rated the overall perceived benefits and adverse effects of each nutraceutical, and also indicated how specific symptoms changed and any adverse effects. From these ratings, the top-rated nutraceuticals for each of 24 symptoms were listed.

For most symptoms, nutraceuticals were reported as moderately effective (net benefit scores >0.25), including aggression/agitation, anxiety, attention, cognition, constipation, diarrhea,



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Emily Ansell Elfer, Autism Parenting Magazine

general benefit, health, hyperactivity, irritability, language/communication, falling asleep, staying asleep, and social interaction/understanding.

Compared to psychiatric and seizure medications rated through the same survey, on average nutraceuticals had significantly higher ratings of overall benefit (1.59 vs. 1.39, $p = 0.01$) and significantly lower ratings of overall adverse effects (0.1 vs. 0.9, $p < 0.001$). Folinic acid and vitamin B12 were two of the top-rated treatments. □

Other symptoms were slightly affected (net benefit scores

between 0.10 and 0.25) such as depression, eczema/skin problems, lethargy, obsessive-compulsive symptoms, reflux/vomiting, sensory sensitivity, stimming and tics/involuntary movements.

Overall effect of nutraceuticals□

Participants were also asked to rate the overall effect of nutraceuticals. A total of 77% said that nutraceuticals had a positive effect, with 23% reporting no effect, and no reports that they resulted in worsened symptoms.□

“The [survey results](#) are encouraging, especially for some autism parents who prefer to consider more natural options for their autistic children rather than conventional medication,” said Emily Ansell Elfer, Editor of Autism Parenting Magazine.

“Some of the nutraceuticals in this survey had not been previously studied for autism, so this is a great starting point in research which can be used to help guide future studies into specific supplements.”

About Autism Parenting Magazine:

Autism Parenting Magazine is an award-winning publication focused on improving the quality of life for families affected by ASD. Established in 2012, the magazine focuses on the objective publication of autism-related topics, developments, treatments, news stories, and happenings. APM has become a vital resource for parents and family members in every part of the globe.

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