

# Healthy CHILDREN

By Tanya Wyatt

**F**or all the conveniences the modern world has to offer, it poses some very real threats to children's health. These threats come in the shape of chronic lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, obesity, allergies, ADHD, learning disabilities, cancer and asthma, to name but a few. To combat these dangers, it's important to understand that what children eat and drink, and the environment they're exposed to, impact directly on their state of health and their ability to fight disease.

Commercially grown foods, everyday household cleaning products and personal-care products are all sources of chemicals which are completely foreign to the human body, and while adults can, to some degree, deal with these harmful compounds through developed detoxification systems (depending on their state of health), children are particularly vulnerable to the damage caused by these chemicals, due to the fact that they consume more food/drink than adults, proportionate to their size, and their little detoxification systems are still developing and unable to cope with the assault.

When a synthesized chemical enters the body, the detoxification system will try to eliminate it as efficiently as it can, but these compounds have two effects when this doesn't happen. The first is that they tend to mimic the hormone oestrogen, causing hormonal fluctuations and imbalances, and the second is that the chemical displaces key nutrients stored in the body and thus causes enzymatic dysfunction (this means that the body cannot 'run' as it should, which creates an ideal environment for disease).

Children, in particular, need exceptionally nutrient-dense, rich and wholesome foods in order to ensure the optimal development of both their immune and nervous systems (amongst others). By wholesome, we're not talking whole-wheat breads and pastas, or fat-free muffins and yoghurts. These foods are all processed and can be very damaging to a child's health. The term 'wholesome' refers to foods that deliver nutrients (as opposed to depleting them) because they are in a complete state – in other words, they're recognised by the body as a foodstuff (e.g. whole grains, vegetables, fruits, free-range meats and fats, legumes, pulses, raw nuts and raw seeds). We will almost certainly have to spend more time in the kitchen preparing and planning meals, but we simply cannot put a price on the health of our children. It truly is our responsibility, as parents, to ensure the very best we can for our little ones.



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