

The Hidden Risks of Food Dyes for Kids' Health



Artificial food dyes are commonly used to enhance the color of candies, cereals, drinks, and snacks, but growing research shows that they pose health risks — especially for children. These synthetic additives, such as Red 40, Yellow 5, and Blue 1, are linked to behavioral issues and other adverse effects in children.

One of the most concerning impacts is the link between food dyes and hyperactivity. A comprehensive review commissioned by the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) concluded that “synthetic food dyes can affect some children’s behavior, including symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, and restlessness” (OEHHA, 2021). The review found that even

children without an ADHD diagnosis may experience behavioral changes when exposed to certain food dyes.

Beyond behavior, artificial dyes also contribute to allergic reactions, skin rashes, and gastrointestinal upset in sensitive individuals. While regulatory agencies still consider these dyes "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS) at approved levels, the evidence shows that limiting or avoiding them entirely will benefit children's health and development.

Emerging research also shows that artificial food dyes negatively affect gut health. Studies indicate that these dyes can disrupt the balance of beneficial gut bacteria and contribute to inflammation in the digestive tract. Since gut health plays a crucial role in immune function and even brain health, this disruption has broader implications for a child's overall well-being.

As awareness grows, many parents are turning to naturally colored foods and dye-free foods to support better focus, mood, and overall well-being in kids.

We encourage you to join us for our **Movie Night on August 7th at 6:30 PM**. We'll be watching ***To Dye For: The Documentary***. This film goes in-depth about the hidden dangers of food dyes and what parents can do to limit their children's exposure to these toxic ingredients.

Source:

Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). (2021). *Potential Neurobehavioral Effects of Synthetic Food Dyes in Children*. California Environmental Protection Agency.

<https://oehha.ca.gov/risk-assessment/document/potential-neurobehavioral-effects-synthetic-food-dyes-children>