

Autism and “Jim Jones” Medical Treatments©

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Why such a title? After reading this article I trust you will agree on the selection. But first, who was Jim Jones? Briefly, in the mid 1970's Jim Jones moved to San Francisco to work with the poor, downtrodden and disadvantaged. Supposedly a preacher but clearly an avowed communist, he was a very persuasive speaker with great communicative abilities. In fact, he was such a tremendous speaker that he persuaded over 900 people to leave the beauty of San Francisco and move into the undeveloped jungles of Guyana to build Utopia out of nothing. What did they accomplish for this move? Apparently in a suicide pact, from drinking cyanide laced Kool-Aid like product, 909 people died, including 276 children.

The point of this article is to show that there are very persuasive and dynamic people out there, some with medical degrees, that are teaching and promulgating false and hurtful therapies (and/or disregarding helpful, science based therapies). We all know that the sun rises in the East. If several thousand people were to agree on one observation that yes, that the sun arose in such and such a location, then one dynamic speaker should not be able to overcome that observation. And yet that is what is happening. One doctor, because of his dynamism, can overturn what very large numbers of people are observing because they trust in his degree and eloquence despite any scientific basis or evidence-based support. From this lopsided equation, I would like to propose the term “**Jim Jones” autism medical treatments**. This thought is to be elaborated on through out this article. There are at least a dozen points to be made against the “Jim Jones” medical model. No any one area will be fully elucidated but this will be more of an overview of topics with a few strong supporting facts to be made for each point.

One of the most astounding beliefs is that there are still doctors who are preaching what has been termed the “**Refrigerator Mom**” effect. This is where it is postulated that a mother does not respond appropriately to her child and so causes the child to be autistic. Leo Kanner in a 1943 paper proposed lack of a mother's warmth caused autism. This idea was further elucidated by Bruno Bettelheim in his book where he compares the autistic child to being a prisoner in a concentration camp with the parents as SS guards. He blamed the parents for not being “good enough” and not wanting their children. Eventually Bettelheim committed suicide by self asphyxiation with a plastic bag over his head. While there are still some who blame the parent, perhaps for the “Jim Jones” gained control from using the weapons of guilt and condemnation, autism is now widely accepted as having organic causes.

Another point is that some attest that there is no correlation in autism to **heavy metals** accumulation within the body. Again, “Jim Jones” medicine does not concern itself with either science or research because this thinking is contrary to published scientific trials. For example, Jim Adams et al. in the Journal of Toxicology in 2009 showed that there is a correlation between the amount of heavy metals stored in a child’s body and the severity of the autistic behavior. One can either go with scientific research and the findings of a peer reviewed medicine or one can put their blind faith in one doctor. Certainly there is safety in numbers and what a compendium of doctors agrees upon.

In the same line of thinking, are the doubts some cast upon **chelation**. As for safety, hundreds of thousands of adults have been chelated and thousands of children. Often, one case is brought up with bad results. Well, JAMA (Journal of the American Medical Association) has published information that pharmaceutical drugs correctly prescribed and correctly given cause some 106,000 deaths a year in American hospitals. Also, in 2005 the FDA did not approve Risperdal for autism because of the number of deaths associated with it. Parents have collectively rated the effects of chelation and rated it as having 24 children with positive effects for every 1 child with a negative effect

This is in contrast to some doctors who wholeheartedly believe that **Prozac** is the answer for autism. However, 1,391 parents have collectively rated Prozac as having 1.1 positive effects for every 1 negative effect. So the benefits that parents get from Prozac are not nearly as great as for chelation at 24:1. People still have a choice in life as what they want to do for their child. But why re-invent the wheel? Certainly trying what others have found that works can save time and money and a child’s life.

Then there is something called a **gluten free/casein free (gf/cf) diet**. The understanding is that undigested molecules of gluten (found in some grains) or casein (a milk protein) can penetrate the gut wall and enter the blood stream. From there the molecules act as morphine like substances upon the brain with all of the associated effects of autism. If the parent or caregiver will get through the several weeks that it will take to change the diet, sometimes the results are astounding. Yet there are doctors who try to dissuade their patients from a simple dietary change. No drugs used? No big pharmaceutical money to be made.

Something similar is how **food allergies** (and food sensitivities) affect the body. While some doctors say that there is no reason to treat for food allergies, it is very highly rated by parents for efficacy. In our clinic we have seen dramatic, over night changes in behavior from simply addressing food allergies. It is a low cost and non-invasive means to address a potentially far reaching problem.

As for biomedical/ non-drug supplementation, again certain doctors say that these do not work. What do parents say, where is there safety but in collective numbers? Parents have rated **fatty acid supplementation** as the single most helpful biomedical intervention that there is with 31 children having positive effects for every one child with negative effects! Fatty acids serve many roles in the body, from anti-inflammatory to helping with the myelination (insulation) of nerve cells. The beauty of this is that fatty acids are foods, with virtually no side effects! How great is that! While there is some cost to the purchase of supplements, it certainly does not compare to pharmaceutical

drugs. Xanax (alprazolam) has a 570,000% profit mark up. No nutritional supplement can even come close to this.

Let's look at **Diflucan**, an antifungal medicine. Once again, certain doctors have said it does not work in autism. Yet as a drug, parents have rated this as being far superior to Prozac. What parents have said is that Diflucan, most highly rated of all the drugs, has better to worse ratios of 13 to 1, again this is to be contrasted with Prozac having only 1.1 to 1 ratios.

Medications do have their risks. One risk is that they do cause **tics**. Perhaps not very often but if it is your child then only one is too many. Contrary to what some docs say, that meds do not cause tics, the scientific literature as seen, for example, the journal Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine shows that 9% of children treated with stimulant medications developed tics or Tourette's. This is an Albert Einstein School of Medicine study.

One doctor has stated that **metabolic causes** of autism are only 1/10,000. In contrast to this position, a study published in the April, 2005 issue of Biology showed that there was greatly reduced amounts of glutathione in autistic children's blood. Glutathione is necessary to detox toxins and especially heavy metals. Without glutathione toxins and heavy metals can accumulate and cause damage. Similarly, urine samples from autistic children show high levels of a chemical called porphyrins. This is due to a much higher metabolic need for certain vitamins and minerals to process the porphyrins. Also, autistic children have been shown to be lower in vitamin B-12 and hence not able to have their livers metabolize toxins and metabolic byproducts. These are only a few examples that show that autism has strong roots in metabolic causes.

Finally, a certain doctor has stated that the **GI tract** has nothing to do with autism. This is in contrast to what Martha Herbert, a professor of Neurology at Harvard, has found. She presented a landmark paper called, *Autism: A Brain Disorder or a Disorder of the Brain*. She proposes that autism is not simply originating in the brain but that there GI tract inflammatory processes that are affecting the brain. In short, to cool the GI tract is to cool the brain. Diana Vargas from Johns Hopkins Univ. did studies on autistic children and confirmed that inflammation has happened to these children. She said that 95% of autistic children have GI problems.

So why has the information that has been presented here not better known? Mark Twain said it best when he remarked that a lie can go half-way around the world while truth is putting on its shoes. A parent or caregiver has the choice whether to go with a dynamic and persuasive speaker such as "Jim Jones" or to go with what other parents and scientific studies published in literature has found to work. Some of this paper has taken information from Autism Research Institutes (Defeat Autism Now! – also known as DAN! doctors). Data was taken from over 27,000 parents who completed questionnaires rating various treatments on a 1 to 6 scale and so a summary of what worked and what did not work can be made. In choosing a doctor, much can be gained by receiving appropriate treatments that are based on empirical and scientific evidence and much lost by relying on the persona of a doctor. At the end of the day, a dynamic personality will not heal a child and psychotropic drugs will merely control symptoms.