

Link Between Antibiotics And Developmental Delays In Children
Developmental Delay Registry
Silver Spring, Maryland

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A new, nationwide survey of nearly 700 children is showing a disturbing link between children with developmental delays and the amount of antibiotics they have taken.

The survey, which included youngsters between the ages of one year and 12 years found that those who have taken more than 20 cycles of antibiotics in their lifetime are over 50% more likely to suffer developmental delays. Children who have had three or fewer rounds of antibiotics were half as likely to become developmentally delayed.

The 9 month survey began in June 1994 by the Developmental Delay Registry; a multi-national database of 800 families, most of whom have children with developmental delays.

The survey's other findings:

- Nearly 75% of the delayed children were reported to be developing normally in their first year of life.
- Developmentally delayed children were 37% more likely to have had 3 or more ear infections than unaffected children.
- Affected children were nearly four times as likely to have had negative reactions to immunizations.
- Affected children were twice as likely to have had ear tubes than unaffected children.

Kelly Dorfman, a licensed nutritionist and co-founder of the Developmental Delay Registry cautions, "Parents should be put on notice that utilizing antibiotics prophylactically could jeopardize their children's development. We believe alternative approaches to treating ear infections should be considered."

The incidence of children in the United States with developmental, behavioral and mental disorders is dramatically increasing. Conservative estimates show that in the last four years the number of children under age 18 with these disorders has grown from 4.8 million to 7.5 million. Included in these pervasive developmental disorders are autism, speech and language problems and multi-system developmental disorders. Symptoms range from skin irritations and sleep disturbances to repetitive behavior and loss of language.

According to Patricia Lemer, a National Certified Counselor and co-founder of the Developmental Delay Registry, "The difference in the occurrence of developmental delays between children who take high doses of antibiotics and those who don't is astounding. We are urging the medical research community to conduct scientific, longitudinal studies to help us find out what is going on here."

For information on ways to treat ear infections without antibiotics please contact the Waldorf Early Childhood Association, (301) 460-6287.