

Improved mood stability in nine children with a broad-based nutritional supplement

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Background: Various individual nutrient categories (e.g., B vitamins) have been evaluated for potential mental health benefits. We are studying a broad supplement (containing primarily trace minerals). Initially, we monitored three boys aged 8-12 (one with OCD, one with PDD, and one with anxiety and mood problems) who had little in common other than their irritable, unstable mood. Prior to treatment each boy had clinically elevated Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) scores; the supplement benefited all of them. A design reversal strengthened our observations: significant regression occurred when not taking the supplement. Based on these results, we embarked on a more rigorous open case series. **Aim:** To determine the benefit of a broad-based nutritional supplement for mood instability in children. **Method:** Nine children with mood/anxiety disorders (6 boys, 3 girls; aged 8-15 years) assessed at entry and post treatment (8 weeks later). Parents completed the CBCL, Young Mania Rating Scale (YMRS), and the Youth Outcome Questionnaire (YOQ). **Results:** After eight weeks, improvement was significant on 7 CBCL scales: withdrawn ($t(7)=3.71$, $p<.01$); anxiety problems ($t(7)=2.50$, $p<.05$); social problems ($t(7)=2.54$).

Treatment side effects were minor and transitory. **Conclusions:** Mood instability may be treated more effectively by a broad supplement rather than single ingredients. Nutritional supplementation for the target symptoms (mood instability) rather than a particular diagnostic category seems warranted. **Keywords:** nutrition, mood disorders, child clinical.