Autism Spectrum Disorder
Complementary and Alternative Medicine

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Lecture Series
#4
Learning Objectives
What can we talk about in 20 minutes?

- CAM
- Resources
- And a few Autism-isms
Fielding Tough Questions

• Alternative therapies and interventions
  – No evidence of benefit
  – 95% of parents use some type of CAM therapy

• The role of immunizations
  – No evidence of an association

• The role of mercury and thimerosal
  – No evidence of an association
Complementary and Alternative Medicine

• Diet / Supplements
  – Gluten- and/or Casein-free diets
  – Essential fatty acids
  – Probiotics
  – Digestive enzymes
  – Carnitine

• Other CAM Therapy
  – Sensory Integration
  – Chiropractor
  – Vaccination delay, separation, or refusal

• Biological Treatment
  – Antifungal
  – Melatonin
  – Homeopathy
  – Antibiotics
  – Secretin
  – Chelation

• Other CAM Therapy
  – Hippotherapy
  – Massage
  – Prisms, vision therapy
  – Auditory Integration Therapy
The role of Immunizations

• MMR
  – Andrew Wakefield and the Lancet

• Multiple immunizations
• Alternative timing
• Single vaccines vs. combinations
## Mercury poisoning versus Autism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINDING</th>
<th>MERCURY POISONING</th>
<th>AUTISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motor</td>
<td>Ataxia</td>
<td>Repetitive behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Bilat. visual field constrict</td>
<td>No problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>Dysarthria</td>
<td>Delayed speech, echolalia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sensory</td>
<td>Peripheral neuropathy, paresthesias</td>
<td>Decreased pain response, Hyperacusis, hypersensitive to sensory stimuli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychiatric</td>
<td>Toxic psychosis; mild nonspecific depression, anx, irritability</td>
<td>Socially aloof, insistence on sameness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head size</td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Chronic mercury toxicity: HTN, skin eruption, thrombocytopenia</td>
<td>Seldom seen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Resources

• Autism Society of America
  – www.autism-society.org

• National Institutes of Health
  – www.nimh.nih.gov/healthinformation/autismmenu.cfm

• First Signs (public awareness)
  – www.firstsigns.org

• CDC/AAP (Act Early)
  – www.cdc.gov/actearly

• Autism Biomedical Information Network
  – www.autism-biomed.org

• Cochran Database of Systematic Reviews of ASD Practice parameters and education
  – www.cochrane.org
More resources from the AAP

• American Academy of Pediatrics clinical report, Identification and Evaluation of Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders

• American Academy of Pediatrics clinical report, Management of Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders

• American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement, Identifying Infants and Young Children With Developmental Disorders in the Medical Home: An Algorithm for Developmental Surveillance and