

# **Critical evaluation of the Defeat Autism Now! (DAN!) biomedical intervention in autism: A parent perspective**

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## **Abstract**

Today's parents who receive a diagnosis of autism for their child are less likely to accept the verdict of "untreatable", particularly when no plausible explanation is offered for the child's withdrawal into autism following a period of normal development. The biomedical approach to autism advocates that autism is treatable and provides much needed hope for parents. Whilst some medical and scientist professionals advocate this approach, there is at present some controversy regarding its rationales and claims of efficacy. This paper reviews the evidence of clinical and medical abnormalities reported in autism, in the areas of heavy metal toxicity, gut inflammation, food intolerance and dietary intervention, as well as cellular metabolism, evidences that substantiate the biomedical approach. This paper also reports on a single case study of a child (LA) during his first 18 months of treatment. Improvements were measured in the majority of the pre-treatment abnormal biomedical factors and this correlated to some improvements in behavior, communication and cognition. This work warrants further investigation into the biomedical approach to autism and argues that every child diagnosed with autism deserves thorough medical investigation and to receive a treatment addressing specifically his or her biomedical issues. The paper calls for redefining autism from its medical and clinical underlying factors rather than from its behavioral features, and raises the issue of experimental design requirement to evaluate its efficacy, taking into account the complexity of the treatment, the time of the intervention and the child specific uniqueness of its main components.

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