



## Do Autistic Children Have a Nutritional Deficiency?

by G. Bossik on August 2nd, 2012 at 11:38 am



Last year, four scientists announced that some autistic children were found to have a zinc deficiency.

Scientist Hiroshi Yasuda and colleagues published this discovery in the study, *Infantile Zinc Deficiency: Association with Autism Spectrum Disorders*.

According to Yasuda and co-authors, they compiled the information by testing hair samples from 1,967 children who had autistic disorders, which impair the ability to communicate and socialize.

"In particular, nearly one half (male: 43.5 %; female: 52.5 %) of the autistic infants aged 0–3 [years old] were found to suffer from marginal to severe zinc deficiency...", the scientists noted in the published research.

Why is zinc so important? As the Linus Pauling Institute has noted, this mineral is involved in nerve impulse transmission.<sup>2</sup> And scientists have found that patients with [autism](#) have abnormalities that inhibit the ability of brain cells to transmit nerve impulses properly.<sup>3</sup>

There are also indications that a zinc deficiency can lead to a build-up of toxic metals. The autism study from Yasuda and colleagues stated that "patients with zinc deficiency have a low excretion ability of toxic metals and [this results] in a higher body burden with them."

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### Sources:

1. Horishi Yasuda et al., "[Infantile Zinc Deficiency: Association with Autism Spectrum Disorders](#)," Scientific Reports.
2. Jane Higdon, "[Zinc](#)," Linus Pauling Institute at Oregon State University.
3. Garcia KL et al., "[Altered Balance of Proteolytic Isoforms of Pro-Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor in Autism](#)," Journal of Neuropathology and Experimental Neurology.