

# 02 VERIST MEDICAL BULLETIN

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## **THE FACTS: ADHD & OMEGA-3**

**Here are some of the ADHD professionals associated with Verist Medical:**

### **Professional Advisory Board**

**Alexander Golbin, M.D., Ph.D.,** Chair, Child Psychiatry, Division of Cook County Hospital; Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Illinois School of Medicine in Chicago; and founder and medical director of The Foundation for Children's Sleep Disorders.

**Phillip Holding Jr.,\* D.O., M.B.A.,** President, The Psych Associates of Du Page County; Clinical Assistant Professor, Section of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, School of Medicine, Indiana University NW; and Senior Medical Director, Qbtech AB.

**Anna Ivanenko,\* M.D., Ph.D., A.B.S.M.,** Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurosciences, Loyola University Medical Center, and an independent practitioner whose specialty is pediatric sleep medicine.

\*A Verist Workshop speaker

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As a leading innovator in the treatment of ADHD, Verist Medical provides proven diagnostic and treatment services—and also a reliable resource for examining emerging trends and methodologies. This bulletin recaps a recent presentation on one such area of promise, the benefits of Omega-3 fatty acids as found in fish oil. You will also find highlights of recent research on the subject, and important criteria to follow when gathering information on the Internet and elsewhere.

### **TREATING ADHD WITH FISH OIL: A DOCTOR SHARES PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AT VERIST WORKSHOP SERIES**

In this workshop, Dr. Gail Kopin, N.D. confirmed that, in her practice, in which she has used fish oil for several years, some patients' ADHD symptoms respond very well to the therapy. She reported that positive response may emerge within one or two months but can sometimes take as long as six to nine months. Dr. Kopin cautioned, however, that due to contaminants in fish habitats, such as PCBs and mercury, patients and doctors should require fish oil suppliers to provide evidence of product purity.

### **RESEARCH STUDIES: WHAT THE EXPERTS ARE FINDING OUT ABOUT OMEGA-3**

Scientific research to date does not provide conclusive evidence of the benefits of Omega-3 in treating ADHD. But some recent studies are beginning to confirm a positive correlation between use of fish oil containing Omega-3 fatty acids and a decline in ADHD symptoms.

An Oxford University study published in the May 2005 issue of Pediatrics<sup>1</sup> (published by the American Academy of Pediatrics) demonstrated a positive effect in children with a disorder closely related to ADHD (and many of the 5–12 year old subjects had high levels of ADHD symptoms pre-test). Key findings included:

- Pre-treatment, average reading and spelling scores were about 1 year below age level for children in both groups. Children receiving fatty acid supplementation for the full six months did so well on their reading and spelling scores that they had essentially caught up with their peers with no additional academic help.
- After the first three months, the children who were receiving fatty acid supplementation were doing so much better than those receiving the placebo that the placebo subjects were switched to fatty acids for months 4, 5 and 6.
- There was no significant change in motor skills among the group treated with fish oil.
- The authors reported that ADHD scores improved significantly for children receiving fatty acids in the first three months and were still improving at the end of the six month study period.

**Jack Sloan,\* Ed.D.,**  
Principal, Holy Cross  
School, former Executive  
Director at Frances Xavier  
Warde Schools, School  
Administrator with 37  
years of experience with  
an extensive background  
in school improvement  
theory and practice.  
Superintendent at District  
37 Wilmette, Il. for 16 years.

**Verist Medical Vernon  
Hills Medical Staff  
Physician**

**Monique d'Avis, M.D.,**  
Verist Medical physician  
(pediatrics) Dr. d'Avis  
established an ADHD  
clinic at the University of  
Illinois Rockford. Educated  
at Oxford and Creighton  
universities, Dr. d'Avis  
received her medical degree  
at the University of Illinois.  
She was appointed Pediatric  
Clinical Instructor at the  
University of Colorado and  
at the University of Illinois.  
Dr. d'Avis interned with the  
World Health Organization  
in 1999.

\*A Verist Workshop speaker

**Next Workshop:**

Saturday,  
September 16—ADHD  
Medications and FDA  
Advisories: The Myths and  
the Facts

**DOING YOUR OWN RESEARCH:  
SEVEN KEYS TO ASSESSING THE VALUE OF WHAT YOU FIND ONLINE**

While Verist Medical always encourages parents to educate themselves as thoroughly as possible on ADHD, we also encourage you to judge the information you find against these standards:

1. **Consider The Source.** Professional medical journals are generally considered reliable sources of information. They screen research offered by publication through a panel of credible authorities in their field.
2. **Examine the Authors' Credentials.** One can further assess an individual author's credentials very quickly and easily by visiting <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi> online. This links the user to PubMed, a service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine.
3. **Look for Placebo Control.** It is not enough to merely report that treatment worked, but that it worked in comparison to some other treatment or no treatment at all. A placebo-controlled study is a study that compares a specific treatment to no treatment at all (placebo).
4. **Rely on Blinded Research.** To meet the highest standards of medical/scientific research, both the subjects and the researchers conducting a study must be blind to which subjects are receiving the real treatment or just the placebo.
5. **Insist on Randomization.** In the best research test subjects are assigned randomly to either active treatment or placebo. This eliminates the possibility that certain types of test subjects might be preferentially assigned to either group.
6. **Follow The Money.** Look at who's paying for the study. The very best research generally does not allow for financial influence on the part of commercial entities (drug companies, etc.) whose interests are tied to the results.
7. **Demand Disclosure.** Researchers sometimes have ties to the commercial interests of the products they research. They are required to disclose these potential conflicts of interest in detail. Not doing so may bar them from further professional publication.

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**ABOUT VERIST MEDICAL—THE ADHD CENTERS**

Verist Medical—The ADHD Centers are dedicated to one goal and purpose: providing the most accurate, effective treatment for ADHD and related behavioral disorders. We combine one of the most advanced assessment tools, the QbTest, with years of experience to create a treatment plan as unique as your child. For more information, call 847.557.2900.

<sup>1</sup>(Richardson, A.J., et al. The Oxford-Durham Study: A randomized, controlled trial of dietary supplementation with fatty acids in children with developmental coordination disorder, *Pediatrics*, 115, 1360-1366)

Verist Medical strives to educate parents and patients in ADHD and other conditions that involve inattention. The materials provided through The Verist Workshop Series including this bulletin are for informational purposes and not intended for use as diagnosis or treatment of a health problem or as a substitute for consulting a licensed medical professional.