



DE LAND, FL
SUN NEWS
—D. 8,890—

DAYTONA BEACH METROPOLITAN AREA

MAR 22 1985

Marty

Neurologist blasts Feingold diet plan

Dear Dr. Mendelsohn:

I am writing in response to your answer to the mother whose son was having difficulty staying awake in class. I have to differ with the information you provided. First of all, considering the family history of difficulty in staying awake, I wonder if this did not present a family history of sleep apnea syndrome or a familial sleep disorder.

Secondly, Ritalin is not as frightening as you have made it out to be. Like any other drug, its abuse certainly does bring along problems. However, for hyperactive children, it has been quite effective when used selectively and properly. In this instance, Ritalin would not be an appropriate drug for this young man at this point in time.

Finally, your recommendations about the Feingold diet are based on considerable misinformation. There have been innumerable studies in an attempt to re-create Dr. Feingold's

**Dr. Robert S.
Mendelsohn**

PEOPLE'S DOCTOR

result. They have, in effect, not proven that his diet is effective and that there are significant numbers of children whose behavior is altered by food additives and food colorings. Because this diet is low in Vitamin C, it can be dangerous if followed too rigidly. The American Academy of Pediatrics has never endorsed Dr. Feingold's approach to the hyperactive child. I would suggest that you bring yourself up-to-date with their recommendations and research in this field.

Jerome S. Haller, M.D., Clinical Professor of Neurology, Professor of Clinical Pediatrics, Tulane

University Medical Center, New Orleans.

Dear Dr. Haller:

For more than a decade, the lineup of forces on the issue of management of hyperactive children has not changed. Pediatric neurologists such as you continue to praise Ritalin and curse the Feingold diet. On the other side, parents organized into various Feingold associations, together with some experts in child development, praise Feingold and curse Ritalin.

Each side claims preponderance of evidence to support its position. My recommendation remains unchanged — parents of hyperactive children should listen to what you and others in your camp have to say. They should simultaneously listen to

those who disagree with you.

Perhaps your university medical center — dedicated to medical education — can run a series of public debates between the two factions to help parents of hyperactive children in the New Orleans area reach an informed decision.