

Can the sweet pills restore the smiles of autistic children?

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Abstract

The second of April marks World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD), every year globally. WAAD was designated by the United Nations in 2007 to help end stigmatization and discrimination against those with Autism and their caregivers. It aims to raise understanding and awareness of this global health issue at all levels of society. The alarming increase in prevalence (1 in 100-WHO) and potentially lifelong disabling nature of the disorder demands awareness as early identification and intervention are pivotal in the management of Autism.

Can the sweet pills restore the smiles of autistic children?

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Dear Editor,

The second of April every year marks the World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD). WAAD was designated by the United Nations in 2007 to help end stigmatisation and discrimination against those with Autism and their caregivers. It aims to raise understanding and awareness of this global health issue at all levels of society. The alarming increase in prevalence (1 in 100-WHO) and potentially lifelong disabling nature of the disorder demands awareness as early identification and intervention are pivotal in the management of Autism.

Autism, also called Kanner's syndrome, is a neurodevelopmental disorder that manifests before the age of three years, characterised by abnormal functioning in the area of social interaction, social communication and restricted, repetitive behaviour. It is 3–4 times more common in boys. Lack of social smile, poor eye contact, lack of socio-emotional reciprocity, relative lack of creativity, poor flexibility in language expression, specific attachment to unusual objects, ritualistic behaviour, stemming movements, self-injuring, sleep and eating disturbances are some of the characteristic problems in autistic children (International Classification of Diseases-10). There are other variants such as Atypical Autism, Rett's syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative disorder and Asperger's syndrome which are now grouped under an umbrella term, that is, 'Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)'.

An integrative approach to the treatment is necessary for the multiple deficits involving different areas of development. ASD affects each person differently hence personalised treatment plans usually involve multiple professionals and are catered towards the individual. Psychopharmacological treatment for autism has limitations as there are no specific medicines that address the core issues of autism and there are potential side effects associated with these drugs. Applied behaviour analysis, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, music therapy, etc., are some of the non-pharmacological interventions useful in Autism, but their accessibility and affordability are limited. There is emerging evidence for the

safety and effectiveness of homoeopathic medicine in ASD. A systematic review of 19 studies on ASD presents convincing evidence yet underlined that the quantum of research done in the area does not match the increasing ASD population.^[1] Some recent publications in Indian Journal of Research in Homoeopathy on Autism highlights the role of individualised homoeopathic medicines in its treatment.^[2,3]

This year's theme for WAAD is 'light it up blue', encouraging everyone to turn on lights in their homes and offices and wear the colour blue. The theme of WAAD-2022 is 'Inclusive Quality Education for All'.^[4] Homoeopathy also has in its armamentarium remedies to combat learning issues of children^[5] and can fit into the integrative approach of educating children along with special education. In our experience, some autistic children treated in our OPDs joined the regular schools and are getting along with the neurotypicals.

At National Homoeopathy Research Institute in Mental Health, Kottayam, we are trying to integrate homoeopathic practice and research and making efforts to spread awareness about Autism on every WAAD. Acquainting people about available treatment regimens and propagating the relative safety and effectiveness of homoeopathic medicines can be instrumental in bringing back the smiles on the faces of autistic children and presenting a ray of hope to these children who deserve a bright future.

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Les pilules sucrées peuvent-elles vraiment restaurer les sourires ?

Le 2 avril marque la Journée mondiale de sensibilisation à l'autisme (WAAD), chaque année dans le monde. WAAD a été désigné par les Nations Unies en 2007 pour aider à mettre fin à la stigmatisation et à la discrimination à l'encontre des personnes autistes et de leurs soignants. Il vise à accroître la compréhension et la sensibilisation à ce problème de santé mondial à tous les niveaux de la société. L'augmentation alarmante de la prévalence (1 sur 100 – OMS) et la nature potentiellement invalidante du trouble tout au long de la vie exigent une prise de conscience, car l'identification et l'intervention précoces sont essentielles dans la gestion de l'autisme.

Können die süßen Pillen wirklich das Lächeln zurückbringen?

Jedes Jahr am zweiten April wird weltweit der Weltautismustag (WAAD) begangen. Der WAAD wurde 2007 von den Vereinten Nationen ins Leben gerufen, um die Stigmatisierung und Diskriminierung von Menschen mit Autismus und ihren Betreuern zu beenden. Er soll das Verständnis und das Bewusstsein für dieses globale Gesundheitsproblem auf allen Ebenen der Gesellschaft fördern. Die alarmierende Zunahme der Prävalenz (1 von 100 - WHO) und die potenziell lebenslange Beeinträchtigung durch die Störung erfordern eine Sensibilisierung, da eine frühzeitige Erkennung und ein frühzeitiges Eingreifen von entscheidender Bedeutung für die Behandlung von Autismus sind.

क्या मीठी गोलियां मुस्कान वापस लौटा सकती हैं?

दुनिया भर में हर वर्ष अप्रैल माह के दूसरे दिन विश्व ऑटिज़्म जागरूकता दिवस के रूप में मनाया जाता है। इस दिन को 2007 में संयुक्त राष्ट्र द्वारा ऑटिज़्म और उनकी देखभाल करने वालों के खिलाफ लांछन और भेदभाव को समाप्त करने में मदद करने के लिए नामित किया गया था। इसका उद्देश्य समाज के सभी स्तरों पर इस वैश्विक स्वास्थ्य समस्या के बारे में समझ और जागरूकता बढ़ाना है। व्यापकता में भयप्रद वृद्धि (100 में 1-WHO) और विकार की संभावित आजीवन अक्षम प्रकृति के कारण जागरूकता की आवश्यकता है क्योंकि प्रारंभिक पहचान और हस्तक्षेप ऑटिज़्म के प्रबंधन में महत्वपूर्ण हैं।

¿Pueden las píldoras dulces realmente restaurar las sonrisas?

El dos de abril marca el Día Mundial de Concientización sobre el Autismo (WAAD), cada año a nivel mundial. WAAD fue designado por las Naciones Unidas en 2007 para ayudar a poner fin a la estigmatización y la discriminación contra las personas con autismo y sus cuidadores. Su objetivo es aumentar la comprensión y la conciencia de este problema de salud global en todos los niveles de la sociedad. El alarmante aumento de la prevalencia (1 de cada 100-WHO) y la naturaleza potencialmente incapacitante de por vida del trastorno exige conciencia, ya que la identificación temprana y la intervención son fundamentales en el manejo del autismo.

甜药丸真的能恢复笑容吗？

每年4月2日是全球自闭症意识日（WAAD）。2007年，联合国指定WAAD帮助结束对自闭症患者及其照顾者的污名化和歧视。它旨在提高社会各阶层对这一全球健康问题的理解和认识。由于早期识别和干预对自闭症的治疗至关重要，因此，该疾病的发病率（每100名世界卫生组织中就有1名）和潜在的终身致残性的惊人增长要求人们提高认识。