Today’s piece is prepared by Dave Werny, MD, based on a story from Bloomberg, entitled ‘Autism Cures Promised by DNA Testers Belied by Regulators’. [www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-21/autism-cures-promised-by-dna-testers-belied-by-regulators.html](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-21/autism-cures-promised-by-dna-testers-belied-by-regulators.html)

The article describes attempts to treat autism with vitamins and other dietary supplements based on genomic testing. It is written from the perspective of an investigative journalist who has interviewed professionals from both “sides” of the issue: naturopathic healthcare providers who offer the genomic testing and supplements, and allopathic medical doctors who find evidence for these therapies to be lacking. The article also includes quotes a few individuals who claim the therapies have been helpful, not only for autism but also for Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, and ALS. The author only obliquely investigates the large amounts of money made with these therapies. The author implies a conflict of interest regarding the holistic provider interviewed for this article, remarking that this clinician reports no interest in clinical judgment while, at the same time, adding that this clinician’s husband owns a business that supplies supplements; while not specifically argued by the author, such conflict of interest may influence clinical interpretation of the scientific literature and the practitioner’s recommendations.

The author provides comparable time to both sides of the story; in this manner, a parent or other reader may be misled by not understanding the lack of legitimate scientific support to the claims and their consequential risks to this lack of understanding (i.e., that these expensive tests and supplements are not yet recommended and may even be harmful from a financial or medical perspective).

The following resource may be helpful:

**RESOURCE ON SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE BEHIND AUTISM TREATMENTS:**Association for Science in Autism Treatment <http://asatonline.org>

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!