Today’s piece was prepared by Kathryn Sun, MD based on an article from CNN entitled [Can Early Intervention Erase Signs of Autism?](http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/10/health/autism-early-intervention/)

This article summarizes the results from a recent study published in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders,* which suggests that for infants showing features of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), early intervention might prevent the development of autism. In this very small pilot study, seven infants ages 9-15 months with symptoms consistent with early ASD were enrolled in a 12-week parent-implemented intervention. By 36 months of age, 5 of the 7 children involved in the study no longer displayed features consistent with ASD.

The CNN article appropriately identifies a highly relevant limitation of the study’s small sample size of only 7 subjects, acknowledged also in the original scientific publication. However, the article doesn’t lend an understanding of broader limitations, and may give the reader the misperception that a diagnosis of autism implies a common origin and common solution to treatment among children diagnosed with ASD. Further, there’s no indication that this was a controlled experimental design (as it seems it was not), and the journalist biases the reader by including a statement from an enthusiastic mother that the treatment “completely helped [my son]…I don’t know what would have happened (otherwise).”

Perhaps the same thing?

Families and parents seeking more information about autism spectrum disorders including early signs and interventions can refer to the resources listed below.

**RESOURCES ON AUTISM:**

[American Academy of Pediatrics](http://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/Committees-Councils-Sections/Council-on-Children-with-Disabilities/Pages/Autism.aspx)*Council on Children with Disabilities – Resources on Autism*

[American Academy of Neurology](http://patients.aan.com/disorders/?event=view&disorder_id=859) *Section on Autism; Resources*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: In The News!