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**INORGANIC CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS AND AUTISM**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that nowadays records a continuous and rapid increase in its prevalence. This increase, in combination with the unknown factors that cause the disorder, has turned the interest of several scientists in its investigation. It could be described as a multifactorial disorder. Factors that have been involved, from research conducted in recent decades mainly, include environmental, chemical, genetic, hereditary and biological factors. In the present literature review we examine the possible association between some inorganic chemicals and autism spectrum disorder. These inorganic chemicals belong to the categories of heavy metals, trace elements and air pollutants. Reference is made to the elements of mercury, lead, arsenic, cadmium and chromium, as they present of great scientific interest on the under-study subject. A number of published studies appear to be showing a positive correlation between hazardous chemicals and autism spectrum disorder. For the future it seems clear that additional focused research is needed.

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