

## Food Allergy Prevention Advice Turns on its Head

According to two new pieces of research, many widely practiced methods for food allergy prevention in children may be ineffective. Former theory involved strict diets for both mom and baby, plus a strategic introduction of foods into the child's diet. However, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and a team of German Researchers have indicated that these strategies may simply be overkill ...

Thousands of moms-to-be concerned that their newborns may be at risk for food allergies have proactively changed their own diets to avoid major allergens while pregnant and nursing. But, Dr. Frank Greer, author of a recent report on the topic and chairman of the AAP, stated that it probably does not matter what pregnant and lactating women eat. Further, his report showed no evidence that mothers should hold out on the introduction of foods such as eggs, fish or peanut butter in the name of allergy prevention.

The AAP maintained their recommendation that atopic disease (eczema, asthma, and food allergies) may be delayed or prevented in high-risk infants if they are breastfed exclusively for at least 4 months, or given infant formula without cow's milk protein (casein). Along this line, they still recommend that parents delay the introduction of solid foods for 4 to 6 months in the name of allergy prevention.

Yet, even this guideline may not be well proven. A team of German researchers says that there is no evidence to support this recommendation. In fact, they found that the delayed introduction of solids for the prescribed time did not lower children's risk nasal allergies, asthma, and food allergies. The one possible exception is eczema. They did find that children given solid foods before 4 months of age were more likely to develop eczema later in life.

Of course, Dr. Joachim Heinrich, the senior researcher for the German study warns that parents should not ignore the advice to delay solid foods, as infants may not be developed enough to properly chew and swallow foods.

More information at [Medical.net](http://Medical.net)

Source: Pediatrics, January 2008