

Breast is best, but might not protect from allergies

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Pregnant women and new mothers receive many messages regarding the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding for babies in the first year of life. Breastfeeding is thought to reduce the risk of allergic rhinitis (hay fever), asthma, food allergies and eczema in children.

According to a new study presented at the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) Annual Scientific Meeting, no significant difference in allergies were found between children who were ever breast fed versus those formula fed.

"We found both groups had similar numbers of kids with [hay fever](#)," said lead study author Quindelyn Cook, MD, ACAAI member. "We also found both groups had similar numbers of kids with asthma, eczema and food allergy."

The study examined 194 patients, aged 4-18 years old, who had been diagnosed as having hay fever with documented results via a skin prick test. The patients were divided into two groups based on whether they were ever breast fed. There were 134 kids in the breastfed group and 60 in the formula fed group.

"We know breastfeeding is good for babies, and [new mothers](#) should continue to breastfeed," said allergist Christina Ciaccio, MD, study author and ACAAI Fellow. "Larger studies need to be done to determine how these results might apply to the larger population."

More information: Abstract Title: Breastfeeding and IgE Sensitization in Children with Rhinitis

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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