

AAAAI: early-life secondhand smoke may up food allergy risk

March 8 2017



(HealthDay)—Exposure to secondhand smoke in the first few weeks of

life could increase the risk that children will develop food allergies, according to research presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology, held from March 3 to 6 in Atlanta.

Anna Bergström, Ph.D., from the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, and colleagues followed the health of 3,764 Swedish [children](#) between 1994 and 1996. The children were followed until they were 16. The researchers periodically surveyed the parents about whether or not their children showed any signs of food allergies. Children also were tested to see if they reacted to certain types of allergens found in food.

The researchers found that children whose parents smoked when the children were 2 months old were more likely to develop signs of food allergies, especially to eggs and peanuts. However, the test findings didn't definitively confirm that food allergies existed.

"Early-life exposure to [secondhand smoke](#) is a well-established risk factor for [asthma](#) and, in some studies, for [allergic sensitization](#) and eczema in children," Bergström said in a news release from the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. "Our research suggests that it does have an impact on the odds of children developing immunoglobulin E-associated symptoms to certain foods."

More information: [Press Release](#)
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Citation: AAAAI: early-life secondhand smoke may up food allergy risk (2017, March 8) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-03-aaaai-early-life-secondhand-food-allergy.html>

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