

Breastfeeding may help prevent children's asthma exacerbations later in life

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In a *Pediatric Allergy and Immunology* analysis of children with asthma, those who had been breastfed had a 45 percent lower risk of asthma exacerbations later in life compared with children who had not been breastfed.

Investigators analyzed data from 960 children aged 4 to 12 years who were using regular asthma medication.

"Although in our study breastfeeding was shown to be a protective factor for asthma exacerbations, it is still unclear whether there is a causal relation between breastfeeding and [asthma exacerbations](#); however the relation might be explained by the influence of breastfeeding on the immune system. Changes in the composition and activity of the [gut microbiome](#) in [early life](#) can influence the immune system and these changes might indirectly lead to changes in asthma later in life," said Dr. Anke Maitland-van der Zee, senior author of the study.

"Further prospective research is warranted to confirm this association and to clarify the underlying mechanisms."

More information: Fariba Ahmadizar et al. Breastfeeding is associated with a decreased risk of childhood asthma exacerbations later in life, *Pediatric Allergy and Immunology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1111/pai.12760](#)

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