

Fighting dust-mite allergies with fish oil

September 6 2017, by Karen Best



Credit: Freshscience

Kids born to mums who'd taken high doses of fish oil in pregnancy were less likely to have some types of allergies, Adelaide researchers have found.

The trial, run by the South Australian Health and Medical Research

Institute (SAHMRI), was the largest in the world to look at the effects of Omega-3 – commonly found in [fish oil](#) – on allergies in children.

At one-year-old, children of mothers who had taken a [high dose](#) of fish oil in pregnancy had less [allergy](#) to egg. They were also less likely to have eczema than those born to mothers who took capsules with no Omega-3.

And at six years of age they had 40 per cent less allergy to house dust mite and were also less likely to have hay fever.

At three years of age there were no differences between the two groups.

Karen says that Omega-3 fats taken during pregnancy may shape the developing fetus' immune system in a way that prevents allergies developing in childhood.

It's an idea she's exploring further in current research, and in particular a link to asthma.

"While the results of this study are really exciting for the future of [allergy prevention](#), there's still a lot more work to be done to determine the ideal dose and full effects of taking a large amount of fish oil during pregnancy," Karen explains.

Over four million Australians suffer from allergies, and we're seeing more people developing allergies in Western countries all the time.

"We'd really love to be able to develop dietary recommendations to help pregnant women prevent allergies in their children," says Karen.

"Who knows—this simple, low-cost intervention during [pregnancy](#) may help to reduce the burden of lifelong allergies in the future."

Provided by Freshscience

Citation: Fighting dust-mite allergies with fish oil (2017, September 6) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-09-dust-mite-allergies-fish-oil.html>

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