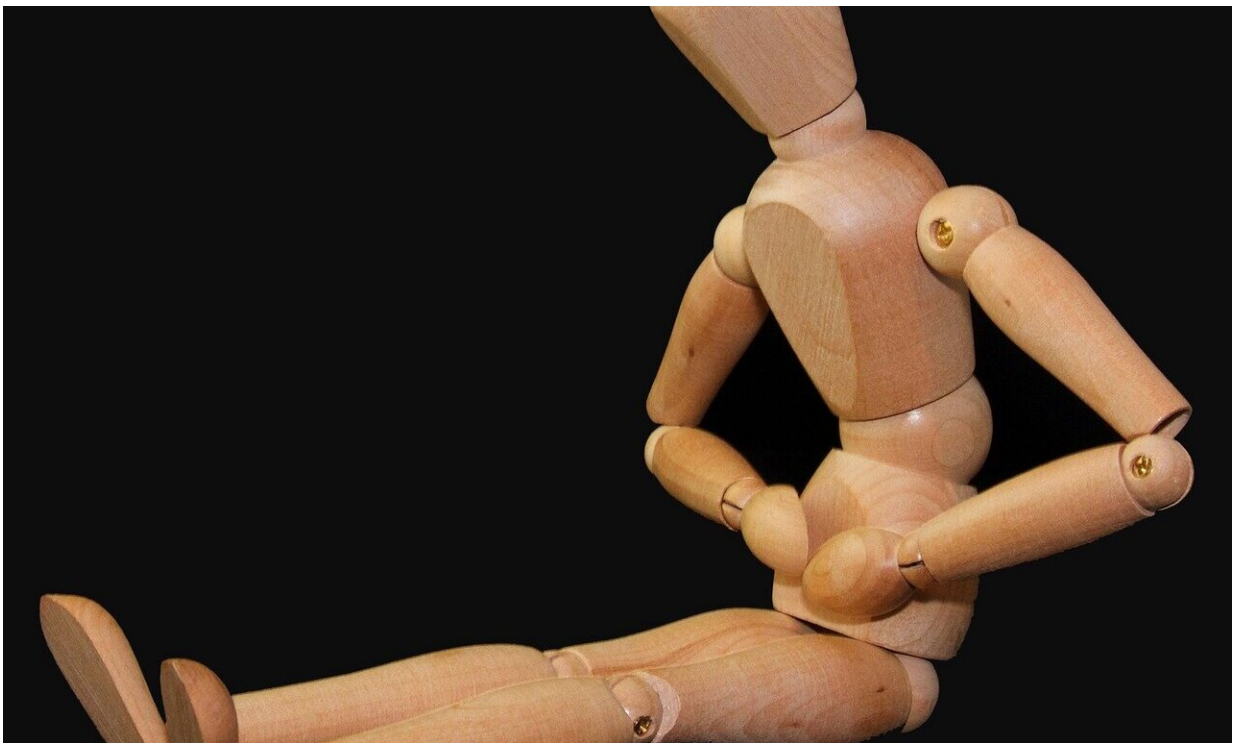


# **Asthma and food allergies during childhood associated with increased risk of irritable bowel syndrome**

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Asthma and food hypersensitivity at age 12 is associated with an increased risk of having irritable bowel syndrome at 16, a new study presented today at UEG Week Virtual 2020 has found.

The research, conducted at the University of Gothenburg and the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, analyzed the health of 2,770 [children](#) from birth to the age of 16. Those with IBS at 16 were almost twice as likely to have had asthma at the age of 12 (11.2% vs 6.7%). Almost half of children with IBS at 16 (40.7%) reported food hypersensitivity at 12 years (compared to 29.2% of children without IBS at 16).

The research also showed that asthma, food hypersensitivity and eczema were all associated with an [increased risk](#) of concurrent IBS at 16 years.

The population-based [cohort study](#) was led by Dr. Jessica Sjölund from the Institute of Medicine at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. "The associations found in this large study suggest there's a shared pathophysiology between common allergy-related diseases and adolescent [irritable bowel syndrome](#)," she explained. "We knew that allergy and immune dysregulation had been suggested to play a role in the development of irritable bowel syndrome, but previous studies on allergy-related diseases and irritable bowel syndrome are contradictory. This knowledge could open up for developing new treatment methods for adolescent IBS, targeting processes of low grade inflammation seen in these allergy-related diseases."

During the study, children and parents were asked to complete questionnaires regarding asthma, allergic rhinitis, eczema and food hypersensitivity at ages 1, 2, 4, 8, 12 and 16 years. At 16, children answered questions based on the Rome III Questionnaire on Pediatric Gastrointestinal Symptoms, allowing participants to be categorized into IBS, functional abdominal pain, and function dyspepsia groups.

IBS affects more than one in ten people<sup>2</sup> and is the most common functional gastrointestinal disorder. It can be extremely disabling for patients, with abdominal cramps, bloating, diarrhea or constipation.

There are often difficulties in diagnosing functional gastrointestinal disorders like IBS, and just one in three people with symptoms of IBS or constipation consult a healthcare professional.

Hans Törnblom, who was involved in the research and is one of Europe's leading IBS experts, says, "Even though [functional gastrointestinal disorders](#) are common, many patients are, unfortunately, negatively stigmatized and labeled. The fact that many IBS sufferers do not seek medical advice should be of great concern. As well as dedicating resources to improve the physical elements of living with disorders like IBS, care and investment must be committed to providing psychological and emotional support for patients so they are comfortable in seeking medical advice."

Provided by Spink Health

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