

Australian study links breast milk to nut allergies

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Children who are solely breast-fed in the first six months of life are at increased risk of developing a nut allergy, new research showed Thursday.

A study by The Australian National University, published in the *International Journal of Pediatrics*, investigated the link in primary school children in the Australian Capital Territory, of which Canberra is the capital.

Parents of more than 15,000 children at 110 schools were asked to report if their child had a nut allergy, and on feeding habits in the first six months of life.

The study found the risk of developing a nut allergy was one-and-a-half times higher in children who were only breast-fed in their first six months.

But children fed food and fluids other than [breast milk](#) were protected against [nut allergies](#).

"Our results contribute to the argument that [breast feeding](#) alone does not appear to be protective against nut allergy in children -- it may, in fact, be causative of allergy," said study author Marjan Kljakovic.

"Despite breast feeding being recommended as the sole source of nutrition in the first six months of life, an increasing number of studies have implicated breast feeding as a cause of the increasing trend in nut allergy.

"[Peanut allergy](#) accounts for two-thirds of all fatal food-induced allergic reactions," added Kljakovic, a professor at the university's medical school.

"It is important for us to understand how feeding practices might be playing a part."

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