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Consuming cow’s milk while breastfeeding could reduce child’s food allergy risk: Study

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By **Pooja Yadav** | December 21, 2020



consuming-cows-milk-while-breastfeeding-could-reduce-childs-food-allergy-risk-study

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Breastfeeding mothers who were eating a lot of fruit and berries tended to suffer from eczema

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The result is based on a survey of more than 500 Swedish women's eating habits and the prevalence of allergies in their children at one year of age.

"We have found that mothers of healthy one-year-olds consumed more cow's milk during breastfeeding than mothers of allergic one-year-olds. Though the association is clear, we do not claim that drinking cow's milk would be a general cure for food allergies", says Mia Stråvik, doctoral student in the Division of Food Science at Chalmers University of Technology, and first author of the study.

She points out that allergy to milk protein is uncommon in adults, so most women can consume milk and dairy products themselves without issue. Lactose intolerance is something completely different when the body cannot break down milk sugars. And in this case, lactose-free dairy products are tolerated by the body.

The study is part of a more extensive research project built around a family cohort study of 655 families who gave birth at Sunderby Hospital near Luleå, northern Sweden, during the years 2015 – 2018. The project was initiated, and the cohort established, by Ann-Sofie Sandberg from Chalmers, Professor Agnes Wold at the University of Gothenburg and the chief physician and paediatric allergist Anna Sandin, affiliated with Umeå University and Sunderby Hospital.

Another result in the study that Mia Stråvik highlights is that children of breastfeeding mothers, who at the four-month measurement were eating a lot of fruit and berries, tended to suffer from eczema to a much greater extent – though she stresses that further studies are needed before anything can be said with certainty about this connection. A follow-up study is currently underway to examine the children's health at the age of four.

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