Early weaning linked to reduced risk of atopic dermatitis

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(HealthDay)—Early weaning at age 4 to 5 months is associated with

reduced risk of atopic dermatitis, according to a study published online Feb. 19 in *Allergy*.

Federica Turati, Sc.D., Ph.D., from the IRCCS Istituto di Ricerche Farmacologiche "Mario Negri" in Milan, and colleagues conducted a case-control study involving 451 cases with incident physician-diagnosed AD in early childhood and 451 controls. Interviewer-administered questionnaires were used to extract data on several factors, including feeding practices.

The researchers found that early weaning (introduction of solid foods at 4 or 5 months of age) correlated inversely with the risk of AD, with lower AD risk for children weaned at 4 months versus those exclusively breastfed (odds ratio, 0.41). Results were similar for weaning started at 5 months of age (odds ratio, 0.39). The correlation persisted for children with and without family history of allergy. There was no correlation for prolonged partial breastfeeding with AD. The introduction of a high number of different solid foods correlated with a reduction in the risk of AD (P trend = 0.02 and 0.04 at age 4 and 5 months, respectively).

"Our data provide evidence against the preventing role of prolonged exclusive (but not partial) breastfeeding on AD occurrence, and confirms recent results indicating a beneficial role of early weaning on AD," the authors write.

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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