

[IMAGE]

Preventing Food Allergies

By Editorial Staff

Food allergies, most commonly to milk, eggs, soy, wheat, tree nuts, shellfish or peanuts, can cause severe reactions and, at a minimum, make daily life a challenge. According to recent research, breast-feeding during a newborn's first three months of life helps shield children from developing these types of food allergies.

A pregnant woman. - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark In a statement by Dr. Robin Wood, international health director for pediatric allergy and immunology at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, she said, "A review of 18 studies demonstrates a significant protective effect of exclusive breast-feeding for at least three months for children with high risk atopy (genetic tendency to develop allergic diseases) against the development of atopic dermatitis and early childhood asthma-like symptoms."

For children at high risk for allergies, Dr. Wood provides the following suggestions to parents:

- During pregnancy and breast-feeding, avoid peanuts and tree nuts.
- Use a hypoallergenic formula (extensively or partially hydrolyzed) to supplement breast-feeding.
- Hold off on feeding solid foods until 6 months of age.
- Introduce egg and milk only after age 1, and peanut and tree nuts only after age 3.

Take steps to intervene as early as possible when food allergy symptoms appear.

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