

The potential of maternal dietary modification for prevention of food allergy

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Effective primary prevention strategies aimed at reducing the onset of IgE sensitization are urgently needed as the incidence of childhood food allergy keeps increasing.

Studies eliminating food allergens during pregnancy have failed to show reduction in the prevalence of long-term IgE-mediated food allergy in children, and recent data provides direct evidence supporting early oral exposure as a means of preventing development of allergy. Since effects on early immune programming may be more significant in utero, there has been increasing interest in the potential protective role of maternal dietary modifications on the development of FA in offspring.

In this article we will review the current knowledge from animal and clinical studies on the role of maternal dietary modification, mainly through supplementation with vitamins, polyunsaturated fatty acids and probiotics, for the prevention of food allergy. Besides, the potential role of some promising FA treatments like Chinese herbal formula FAHF-2 for the primary prevention of FA in offspring will be reviewed.

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