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## Scientists study the link between children's nutrition and adult diseases

Child Health News

Published: Wednesday, 16-Jan-2008

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Researchers from the [Department of Pediatrics](#) of the [University of Granada](#), in collaboration with another 38 universities and companies from 16 European countries, will study the effects of children's nutrition on the onset of cardiovascular problems, diabetes, obesity, allergies, weak bones, neuromotor functioning and children's behavioural aspects.

The EARNEST project (The Early Nutrition Programming Project) aims to help in the development of policies, information campaigns, documents, guides and recommendations on the nutritional components of children's food, for the improvement of children's formulas. It also collaborates in the design of plans preventing and avoiding nutrition effects on the metabolism.

Thanks to this project, the [University of Granada](#) becomes the only Spanish investigation centre taking part in this ambitious initiative, the first of its kind in Europe. **Cristina Campoy Folgoso**, the professor heading this initiative in Granada, emphasizes that the "early nutrition programming" is quite a recent subject in the health and science field today. "Different studies show how food can have long-term consequences in children's growth and health during pregnancy, the breastfeeding period and childhood. Moreover, food can also have influence over the later onset of diseases", states the researcher.

### Study of diseases

This project aims to answer the question about the extent of nutrition effects of prenatal, postnatal, and infant diets of someone among the current European population in critical periods of development as well as the efficiency of actions preventing and avoiding long, medium and short-term metabolic effects on health.

The project will tackle randomly assigned clinical tests and nutritional interventions during pregnancy and childhood, pilot studies, tests on animals, cells and genomics, as well as social and economic studies connected with nutrition in the first stages of life and their significance in the development of later diseases. The researchers hope to find the genetic mechanism of diseases such as diabetes and obesity with this project. "Obesity, a growing global epidemic, begins, partly, during child development -explains professor Campoy Folgoso-. It is known that breastfed children's growth kinetics differ from those fed with commercial foods. These children easily gain weight and height. Considering these consequences, linked with eating habits, the purpose of this project is to study whether breastfeeding can prevent a later risk of obesity.

<http://www.ugr.es/>

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