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Teens Breast-fed as Infants Have Stronger Leg Muscles

They did better on horizontal jump, 'explosive strength' tests, study finds

FRIDAY, Jan. 7 (HealthDay News) -- Adolescents who were breast-fed as infants have stronger leg muscles and "explosive strength" than those who were not breast-fed, a new study finds.

Spanish researchers asked the parents of 2,567 adolescents about the type of feeding their children received when they were infants, and tested the muscular strength and aerobic abilities of the adolescents.

Both male and female adolescents who were breast-fed did better on a horizontal jump test than those who were not breast-fed, an indication of stronger leg muscles. And those who were breast-fed for a longer period of time had even stronger leg muscles. This was true regardless of the teens' fat mass, height or the amount of muscle present.

"Until now, no studies have examined the association between breast-feeding and future muscular aptitude," study author Enrique Garcia Artero, of the University of Granada, said in a news release from the university. "However, our results concur with the observations [that] other neonatal factors, such as weight at birth, are positively related to better muscle condition during adolescence."

The study was published recently in the *Journal of Nutrition*.

The researchers noted previous studies have shown many other benefits for infants and children who have been breast-fed, including increased protection against childhood allergies, skin diseases, obesity and diabetes.

More information

The U.S. National Women's Health Information Center has more about the [benefits of breast-feeding](#).

-- Robert Preidt

SOURCE: University of Granada, news release, Jan. 5, 2011

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