

## Breathe easy moms: Baby formula made from cow's milk does not cause diabetes

A 15-year global study of children genetically predisposed to developing Type 1 diabetes found that drinking formula made with cow's milk did not increase such children's risk for developing the disease.

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"Previous studies have indicated that early exposure to complex foreign proteins, such as the proteins in cow's milk, may increase the risk of Type 1 diabetes in people with genetic risk for the disease," said one of the study's authors, [Neil H. White, MD](#), a Washington University professor of pediatrics and of medicine. "The question was whether delaying the exposure to complex foreign proteins will decrease the risk of diabetes. The answer is no."

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Beginning in 2002, White and his research colleagues examined 2,159 infants in 15 countries. Each infant had a family member affected by Type 1 diabetes, as well as a genetic propensity for the disease that was determined with a blood test given at birth.

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Of the infants who consumed the conventional cow's-milk formula, 82 (7.6 percent) eventually developed diabetes. For those who received the hydrolyzed-casein formula, 91 (8.4 percent) developed the disease.

"This study shows no statistically significant difference between the groups in terms of how many of these children developed diabetes; therefore, it helps provide a long-awaited, definitive answer to the controversy regarding the potential role of cow's-milk formula in the development of Type 1 diabetes," said White.

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