

Early egg introduction reduces childhood allergy rates in Australia

University of Queensland, Australia



Australian guidelines recommending egg be introduced into a child's diet in the first year of life has seen the number of children with egg allergy drop by 17 per cent, researchers have found.

Research led by The University of Queensland and Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Australia, examined 7,200 children in 2 Australian population-based studies, to assess if egg allergy rates had declined since the introduction of 2016 guidelines.

Associate Professor Jennifer Koplin of UQ's Child Health Research Centre said egg allergy is one of the most common food allergies in young children.

Australia has one of the highest rates of food allergy in the world with one in 10 infants allergic to one or more foods.

To our knowledge, this is the first study to show a reduction in egg allergy after the introduction of new infant feeding guidelines at a population level.

Most parents followed the guidelines, and these results provide reassurance that this advice will help reduce the chance of their child developing an egg allergy."

Jennifer Koplin, Associate Professor, UQ's Child Health Research Centre

Associate Professor Rachel Peters of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute said the reduction in egg allergy was even more pronounced in babies with eczema, which is a known risk factor for food allergies.

Egg allergy rates reduced

Of these children, egg allergy rates were reduced from 35 per cent to 22 per cent.

"The introduction of the 2016 guidelines was a major change from most advice given in the 1990s and early 2000s which recommended parents delay giving eggs and other allergenic foods until 1-3 years of age if there was a strong family history of allergy," Dr Peters said.

"Current advice from the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy, based on the latest available evidence, is to introduce well-cooked egg and smooth peanut butter soon after a baby starts eating solid foods, usually around 6 months of age."

Other common allergy-causing foods such as cow milk, fish, sesame, wheat and tree nuts are also recommended to be included in the diet before one year of age.

Dr Koplin said more research into food allergies was needed.

"Although we are beginning to see a reduction in egg allergy, it still remains common," she said.- **www.news-medical.net, June 8, 2026**

"Some babies can still develop food allergy despite following the guidelines, and further research is underway and needed, to find other prevention strategies.

"But we hope these findings provide reassurance to parents to continue following the current recommendations."

Source:

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Koplin, J. J., *et al.* (2026) Egg Allergy Prevalence Before and After Guidelines for Earlier Egg Introduction. *JAMA*

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