

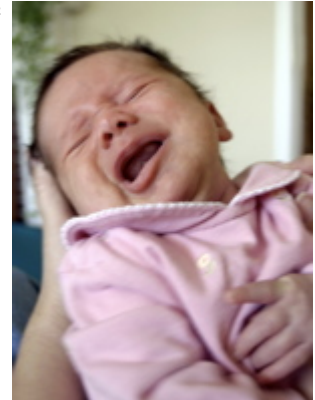
Antibiotic Exposure as a Baby Nearly Triples Asthma Risks

Children who are given antibiotics before they are 1 year old run a higher risk of developing asthma. Canadian researchers analyzed seven studies involving more than 12,000 youngsters, and found that those who were given antibiotics early on were almost three times as likely to develop asthma.

Another study found that multiple exposure to antibiotics increased the risk even more, by 16 percent for every additional course of antibiotics given.

Currently, children are often prescribed antibiotics for respiratory and ear infections, even though many such infections are viral in origin and therefore unaffected by antibiotics. The rate of Canadian children who develop asthma is double what it was two decades ago.

[Toronto Star](#) March 13, 2006
[Canada.com](#) March 14, 2006



Dr. Mercola's Comment:

Children being prescribed [antibiotics](#) before their first birthday is [not at all an unusual occurrence](#). Most of these antibiotics are used to treat ear infections, and it saddens me deeply to see this as preventing ear infections in children is incredibly simple.

One of the most common reasons why ear infections occur is a reaction to pasteurized milk. Over 50 percent of ear infections are resolved by simply removing pasteurized milk. Raw milk will typically not cause ear infections. If restricting pasteurized dairy does not work the next step would be to remove all wheat products and forms of processed sugar like fruit juices.

Once these simple dietary modifications are addressed it is very rare for ear infections to recur again. There is [rarely a need for ear tubes, as they typically do not help](#) and can contribute to long-term hearing loss. Even if it weren't easy to prevent ear infections, [most ear infections clear up without antibiotics](#). If your child does develop an ear infection please [review my practical alternatives](#), which are very effective in my practice. Interestingly, the Canadian researchers believe exposure to antibiotics is only a part of the cause of the asthma, citing the [hygiene hypothesis](#) -- the argument that children not exposed to viruses and bacteria factors won't build the natural immunities that protect them from disease later on -- as a likely contributor.

Fact is, the fear that your baby will get sick at all may make them sicker in the long run. Children aren't meant to be isolated from life in a sealed room. They're designed to [run, play and, on occasion, get dirty](#). There are certainly times when they are necessary but antibiotics are typically [widely overused](#). I am not opposed to their use in every circumstance, only to the reliance on them in situations where they are obviously of little or no use. In my experience that is well over 95 percent of the time they are prescribed.

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