

Why your asthmatic child should eat more fruits and vegetables and stay off fast food

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(NaturalNews) Asthma is a condition of the lungs, right? A recent study has revealed one aspect of the diet which helps protect against asthma: the consumption of fermentable dietary fibers found in vegetables and fruits. In gist, research funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation found that, after the fibers in fruits and vegetables reach the intestines, bacteria in the gut ferment them, turning them into short-chain fatty acids. These fatty acids then enter the bloodstream, where they have an impact on immune cell development in the bone marrow. When there is an external trigger or allergen, these immune cells then make their way into the lungs, where they help regulate the immune response to the offending agent. In other words, they help moderate the allergic response.

Previous research had already revealed that gut bacteria play a big role in preventing intestinal cancer by digesting and fermenting fibers. "We are now showing for the first time that the influence of gut bacteria extends much further, namely up to the lungs," says Benjamin Marsland from Lausanne University Hospital, the leader of the study team.

For the study, when mice which were put on a standard diet containing 4.0% fermentable fibers were exposed to an extract of house dust mites, they developed a milder allergic reaction with much less mucus in the lungs compared to mice which were fed a low-fiber diet containing only 0.3% fermentable fibers. This latter group mimics the standard Western [diet](#), which contains only up to 0.6% of fibers on average.

On top of that, mice which were fed a diet enriched with more fermentable fibers also exhibited a more favorable response than those on a standard diet, further proving the protective effects of the dietary fibers.

Other than the low-fiber diet fed to the mice being proportionally similar to the Western low-fiber diet, another reason why the findings of this study are significant is that there is a large degree of similarity in humans and mice when it comes to the studied aspects of the immune system.

Research shows that unhealthy fats are problematic for asthmatics too

In other research conducted a few years ago, it was discovered that eating high-fat, high-calorie meals led to elevated airway inflammation hours after the meals. Further, the high-fat meals also seemed to lower the effectiveness of the asthma medication Ventolin (albuterol).

The high-fat meals in question comprised of **fast food** burgers and hash browns, while the low-fat meals being compared with comprised of low-fat yogurt.

"This is the first study to show that a high fat meal increases airway inflammation, so this is a very important finding," said Dr. Lisa Wood, Ph.D., one of the researchers for the study. "The observation that a high **fat** meal changes the asthmatic response to albuterol was unexpected as we hadn't considered the possibility that this would occur."

Another large international study had also found that consuming three or more burgers per week could increase a child's risk of being hit by asthma and wheezing. That study had looked at data from 1995 to 2005 on 50,000 children aged 8 to 12 from around the world.

On the flip side, it was found that a Mediterranean diet which contains lots of vegetables, fruits and fish helps lower that risk.

Conclusion: Putting the research together, it would seem that a diet high in fruits and vegetables and low in unhealthy fats is an important part of any asthma prevention and treatment protocol.

Sources for this article include:

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