

Pets May Reduce Children's Allergy Risk **Children Who Had a Dog or Cat as Infants Less Likely to Become Allergic**

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WebMD Health News

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Inside this issue

Pets May Reduce Children's Allergy Risk	Page 1
Recruiting Studies	Page 2
Indoor Fall Activities	Page 3
Butternut Squash Soup	Page 3



Having a dog or cat at home during the first year of life may help prevent pet [allergies](#) later on.

Researchers say parents often worry whether having animals in the home will increase the risk of their children developing pet allergies. But a new study suggests that's not the case.

In contrast, researchers found that young adults who had a dog or cat at home as infants were only about half as likely to develop a significant amount of antibodies to dog or cat allergens, a process called allergic sensitization.

"This research provides further evidence that experiences in the first year of life are associated with health status later in life, and that early life pet exposure does not put most children at risk of being sensitized to these animals later in life," researcher Ganesa Wegienka, PhD, of the department of biostatistics and research epidemiology at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, says in a news release.

Having a Pet Prevents Allergies?

In the study, published in *Clinical & Experimental Allergy*, researchers looked at the association between lifetime dog and cat exposure and allergic sensitization in a group of 566 boys and girls from Detroit who were followed from birth until age 18.

The participants' families completed annual surveys with information about indoor pets (animals who spent at least 50% of their time inside) and were tested at age 18 for allergic sensitization to dogs and cats.

Researchers found that being exposed dogs or cats at home during the first year of life was the most important factor in the reduced risk of allergic sensitization to that specific animal later in life compared to those that did not have an indoor pet in the first year. Exposure at other times during childhood did not have any significant protective effect.

For example, the results showed that boys who had an indoor dog during the first year of life were half as likely to become sensitized to dogs by age 18 than those who did not have an indoor dog in the first year of life.

Overall, those who had a pet indoor cat as infants were 48% less likely to be sensitized to cats than those who didn't.

Currently Recruiting Studies

Does your child suffer from allergies year-round?

If your child has a stuffy nose or sneezes all year due to dust, mold, pet, or other allergens, he or she may be eligible to participate in a clinical research study at ASTHMA, Inc. We are looking for otherwise healthy volunteers to help us study an investigational medication for perennial pediatric allergies. Participants must be between the ages of 6 and 11, and have had allergies requiring treatment (prescription or over the counter) for at least one year. All study-related care will be provided at no cost to you, and participants will be compensated for time and travel.

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Is your baby allergic to cow's milk?

We are enrolling participants for a 17 week clinical research study involving a new test Neocate infant formula. There are 6 clinic visits and one phone call. Participants must be aged birth to 8 months and have a known allergy to cow's milk. Qualified participants will receive compensation for time and travel. All study related diagnostic testing, infant formula and study related medical care is provided at no cost to you.

Study: Neocate

Allergic Asthma

Participants with allergic asthma needed for a research study. If you are 18 to 65 years of age, a non-smoker, and using a daily asthma medication, you may qualify to participate in this 6 month clinical research study. Participants will receive compensation for each completed visit. All study related diagnostic testing, investigational medications and medical care provided at no charge to you.

Study: ACT11457

Uncontrolled Asthma?

Participants with uncontrolled asthma are needed for a research study using an investigational new medication. Must be on an inhaled corticosteroid. Must be 18-75 years old and non-smoker. Qualified participants may be compensated for time and travel. Study related diagnostic testing, Investigational medications and medical care may be provided if you qualify.

Study: MI

Do you have Eczema?

Have you used PROTOPIC® (tacrolimus) ointment before you were 16 years of age to treat your eczema? Would you be interested in participating in a long-term program that will monitor your health? You may be eligible to participate in an observational research study. Talk to your physician if you would like to learn more about this important program.

Study: Apples

Indoor Fall Activities

Sometimes as the fall season progresses, the temperature drops or it rains (sometimes it will even snow). Parents and kids can try to find some fun inexpensive indoor activities. Listed below are some inexpensive indoor activities for families:

- Attend library programs (i.e. story time, movie night at the library, special speakers, etc).
- Make leaf rubbings or leaf wreaths from what was collected during walks.
- Make fall candle holders by taking fall colored (orange, yellow, brown, green) tissue paper, baby food jars (smaller jars, usually step 1 in baby food), glue that is watered down, and paint the tissue paper onto the baby food jars with glue mixture.
- Go to a mall playground area.
- Have a movie night with microwave popcorn and a rented movie (i.e. from the library or dollar rental box).
- Set up a small tent in the living or family room and have children "camp out" indoors.
- Go to a movie matinee.
- Find out which local museums have free and reduced admissions and visit them.
- Volunteer at a food pantry, church, local organization, etc.
- Can items from the garden.
- Bake treats and share with family and friends.
- Make fall decorations and place them in the front window.

Families have many options what can be done during the season of fall, both outdoors and indoors. Having fun during the fall season does not have to cost a lot either. The toughest decision will be deciding what to do first – go on a walk or visit a local park?

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Butternut Squash Soup

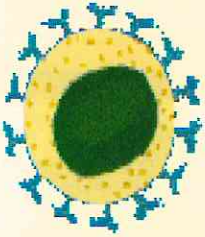
Ingredients

- 1 (2 to 3 pound) butternut squash peeled and seeded
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 6 cups chicken stock
- Nutmeg

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions: Cut Squash into 1 inch chunks. In large pot melt butter: Add onion cook until translucent (about 8 min.) Add squash and stock. Bring to a simmer and cook till squash is tender , 15-20 min. Remove squash with slotted spoon place in a blender and puree. Return blended squash to pot stir and add in nutmeg, salt and pepper.

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