

Breaking News: AAP recommends early introduction of peanuts for infants



The incidence of food allergy, specifically peanut allergy, has tripled over the past decade in the United States. The reason for this staggering increase is not clear, however, recent research has repeatedly suggested that avoidance of highly allergenic foods such as peanut may contribute to the development of peanut allergy. Recently, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a statement recommending the early introduction of peanuts for high-risk infants. This statement which was issued along with the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, is based on the groundbreaking research published earlier this year by Du Toit et al. In this study, 640 high-risk infants (defined as infants with either egg allergy or a history of eczema) between the ages of 4 and 11 months were randomized to consume peanut products at least 3 times per week or to completely avoid peanut products for the first 5 years of life. This study demonstrated a successful 11% to 25% absolute reduction in the risk of peanut allergy in high-risk infants and a relative risk reduction of up to 80% if peanut was introduced between 4 and 11 months of age. These data provide Level 1 evidence that the practice of early peanut introduction is safe and effective in high-risk infants. The AAP further goes on to recommend that **infants at high risk of food allergy, such as those with eczema and prior history of food allergy, be evaluated by an allergist for skin prick testing and oral challenge prior to the introduction of peanut at home.**

At South Bay Allergy & Asthma Group, we have extensive experience with the diagnosis and management of food allergy, and would be happy to assist you and your patients with peanut introduction, particularly in infants with a history of eczema or other food allergies. As this study was widely publicized in the media, your patients will likely have questions regarding whether early peanut introduction is the right choice for their child. We are pleased to help answer any questions you or your patients may have regarding peanut and other food allergies.



REFERENCES:

Consensus Communication on Early Peanut Introduction and the Prevention of Peanut Allergy in High-risk Infants. PEDIATRICS Vol. 136 No. 3 September 1, 2015;600-604

Du Toit G, Roberts G, Sayre PH, Bahnson HT, Radulovic S, Santos AF, et al. Randomized Trial of Peanut Consumption In Infants At Risk For Peanut Allergy. NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE 2015;372:803-13.