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Caesarean Section Children Have A 5 Times Higher Risk For Developing Allergies

Infants delivered by C-section are five times more likely than those born vaginally to become allergic to common triggers such as dust mites and pets.

Scientists believe the babies are left vulnerable by avoiding the journey through the birth canal, which would normally expose them to their mother's bacteria.

Lead researcher Dr. Christine Cole Johnson, from the Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit, U.S.A. said: 'This further advances the hygiene hypothesis that early childhood exposure to micro-organisms affects the immune system's development and onset of allergies. The discovery lends support to the 'hygiene hypothesis' that links childhood allergy to over-clean conditions early in life. 'We believe a baby's exposure to bacteria in the birth canal is a major influencer on their immune system.'

Dr. Johnson's team studied 1,258 newborn babies and assessed them when they were one month, six months, one and two-years-old. By two years of age, babies born by C-section were much more likely to have developed allergies to triggers in the home such as house dust mites and dander / dead skin shed by dogs and cats.

Umbilical cord and stool samples from each baby



were analysed, together with blood samples from both parents, breast milk and house dust. Information was also collected on every family's history of allergy or asthma, household pets, tobacco smoke exposure, baby illnesses, medication use and aspects of pregnancy.

The results of the research were presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology in San Antonio, Texas in February 2013.

In the case of a Caesarean section, the baby has no contact with the birth canal. Instead the body is immediately removed from a sterile environment, and the chances of developing allergy are be heightened.

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