
Update Note: Practical Dietary Prevention Strategies for Infants at Risk of Developing Allergic Diseases

Dear BDA member

You may be aware that the First Steps Nutrition Trust, recently published a position statement on partially hydrolysed whey formulas. In that statement they quoted the BDA Allergy prevention statement with the following sentence: *“A British Dietetic Association consensus statement in 2010 (BDA, 2010) recommended that partially or extensively hydrolysed casein based formula should be used in the first 4-6 months if babies are not breastfed and where there is family risk of atopic diseases, but they did not recommend hydrolysed whey based formula.”*

The BDA statement has not been accurately quoted as it did not recommend a partially hydrolysed casein formula, but an extensively hydrolysed casein formula as neither does partially hydrolysed formula exist in Europe for allergy prevention nor is there evidence for such formula for allergy prevention. The BDA statement in fact recommended the following:

“Recommended alternatives to breast milk are partially or extensively hydrolysed formula milks, with infants at highest risk being given extensively hydrolysed casein formula milk. These hydrolysed formulae should be used for 4-6 months or until the time that cow’s milk in any form has been introduced into the infant’s diet.”

At the time of publishing this statement, no partially hydrolysed whey formula was available in the UK, but the group writing this document felt it important to highlight the availability of partially hydrolysed feeds due to its availability in Europe and also these formulas being mentioned in the official prevention statements of a variety of European and American groups.

The two main authors of this prevention document are not only involved in primary research in this area but have also been involved with updating the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology Prevention Statement, which has now been published in the April edition of Allergy 2014. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/?term=EAACI+Food+Allergy+and+Anaphylaxis+Guidelines.+Primary+prevention+of+food+allergy>.

The BDA position statement will now be updated to reflect all the new research in this area as well as current opinion on the use of partially hydrolysed whey formulas for allergy prevention. The Food Allergy and Intolerance Specialist Group of the BDA will soon be looking for dietitians that would like to be involved in the revised position statement.

Please do contact Rosan Meyer (Rosan.Meyer@gosh.nhs.uk) or Carina Venter (Carina.Venter@port.ac.uk) for further information.

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5th Floor, Charles House, 148/9 Great Charles Street Queensway, Birmingham B3 3HT

Tel: 0121 200 8080 Fax: 0121 200 8081 email: info@bda.uk.com

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0121 200 8080, bda.uk.com
