ALLERGY, GENETICS

ANY PROOF FOR HYGIENE HYPOTHESIS BY LOCKDOWN BABIES?

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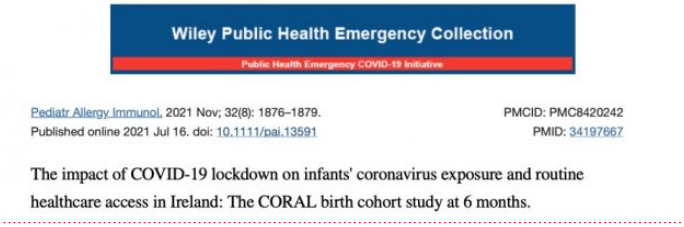
It is an interesting question – does social distancing influence later allergy ? Lawler et al. in November 2021



http://www.doi.org/10.1111/pai.13591

report the impact of COVID-19 lockdown in 365 Irish babies at 6 months of age enrolled in the CORAL study. These were a subset of 3773 infants born in two participating major maternity hospitals in Dublin between March and May 2020. Unfortunately only 10% of children participated, so families were self-selected. Allergic rhinitis was common in both mothers (36%) and fathers (30%) which is higher than reported by Allergy Ireland (26%) and explained by the authors that parental allergy is “higher than the general population, which may have contributed to parental desire to enrol in this study.”

A follow-up in March 2022 in 344 children consecutively shows higher food allergy (4.7% vs 3.5%, NS) when compared to an earlier cohort (BASELINE 2008). Atopic dermatitis increased of 15.5% in the BASELINE study to 25.3% in CORAL (no P reported) which is not unexpected given the interest of parents in an allergy study.

Maybe a short questionnaire at 2026 school entry would be informative than the current study? Nevertheless the authors needed now to analyze their stool samples sitting in the shelves. This is the content of the March 2023 preprint that has just been published. There may be an association of some bacteria with atopic dermatitis but in the end it is a useless result as the strongest risk factors for atopic dermatitis – parental history and/or FLG mutations – are missing from the presented models

At the end we can safely assume that the 2020 lockdown did not have any influence on al-

lergy prevalence in Ireland.