

Can we prevent coeliac disease?

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Presentation

Histopathology

Immunology

Small Intestine & Nutrition

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The Teddy study following 7000 at-risk children found the peak incidence of coeliac disease occurs between ages 3 and 4 years, with the speaker reporting that timing or dose of gluten introduction has shown conflicting effects on prevention in clinical trials and that gut microbiota differences precede disease onset.

KEY POINTS

- The speaker reported that in the Teddy prospective cohort, the peak incidence of coeliac disease occurred between 3 and 4 years of age, with a mean age of diagnosis of 5.8 years, and very few cases after puberty.
- Higher gluten intake during the first five years of life was associated with increased risk of coeliac disease in genetically predisposed children, and frequent enterovirus infection between 1 and 2 years of age was associated with increased risk of coeliac disease autoimmunity.
- The PreventCD trial found no difference in cumulative incidence of coeliac disease at age five years between infants receiving small quantities of gluten at 4 to 6 months versus placebo, while late introduction at 12 months versus 6 months delayed but did not prevent onset.
- The UK EAT study reported that by three years, 1.5% of children in the standard introduction group had confirmed coeliac disease versus none of 488 children in the early high-dose gluten group, suggesting early high-dose consumption may prevent disease by age three years.
- The speaker reported that Teddy microbiota analysis of 137 cases and 232 controls found coeliac disease cases were deficient in key beneficial bacteria prior to diagnosis, with reduced *Phascolarctobacterium* and *Lactobacillus* six months before onset, and that cases had lower fibre intake than controls.

- The speaker stated that the role of gut microbiota in coeliac disease pathogenesis is still unclear, clinical trials of microbial modulation are pending, and concluded that coeliac disease cannot yet be prevented, recommending that if intervention is attempted it should be done very early.

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