Towards prevention: A trinational birth cohort study to unravel modifiable triggers of inflammatory bowel disease

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Surgery | Primary Care | IBD

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A Scandinavian birth cohort study of approximately 200,000 children followed from birth into adulthood found that higher diet quality and specific healthy lifestyle habits during early life and childhood were associated with reduced risk of later inflammatory bowel disease.

KEY POINTS

- High versus low diet quality in early childhood and during teenage years was associated with lower risk of IBD, with high fruit intake specifically linked to reduced Crohn's disease risk and high salted snack intake linked to increased ulcerative colitis risk, as stated by the speaker.
- No association was found between breastfeeding duration and later IBD risk in what the speaker described as the largest study to date on this question.
- Greater maternal diet diversity during pregnancy was associated with lower risk of offspring ulcerative colitis in the Norwegian cohort.
- Children with the most healthy lifestyle habits including physical activity, lower body mass index, and no passive smoking exposure had reduced risk for later IBD, particularly Crohn's disease.
- The speaker noted that diet is only one part of the picture and emphasized the need to combine environmental risk factors with genetic risk scores and biomarkers to identify who would benefit most from prevention interventions.

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