Antibiotics May Increase Infants' Risk of Developing Asthma

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Parents shouldn't breathe easy when giving antibiotics to babies. That's because the infection-fighting drugs could predispose infants to asthma, according to findings published in the Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology and reported by the Washington Post.

For the study, scientists evaluated health insurance data on more than 60,000 children in the United States, ages 7 and younger. Of those kids, almost 27,000 children were prescribed antibiotics before they were a year old.

Researchers found about 18 percent of all the children included in the study eventually suffered from wheezing or asthma. What's more, the kids who were given antibiotics were twice as likely to develop wheezing symptoms and 60 percent more likely to get full-fledged asthma by age 3 than those who'd not taken any of the bacteria-killing meds.

The study also found that the more antibiotics kids received early in their lives, the more likely they were to suffer respiratory issues.

As a result of these findings, researchers suggest doctors prescribe the drugs only in the most serious of circumstances.

Studies also show that antibiotics are often under-prescribed to black and minority kids, but experts say that may not be such a bad thing. Click here for more information.

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