

Nutrients in child's first 1,000 days key for neurodevelopment

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(HealthDay)—The provision of adequate nutrients and healthy eating

during a child's first 1,000 days is important for optimal neurodevelopment, according to an American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement published online Jan. 22 in *Pediatrics*.

Sarah Jane Schwarzenberg, M.D., and Michael K. Georgieff, M.D., from the University of Minnesota Masonic Children's Hospital in Minneapolis, address maternal prenatal nutrition and children's nutrition in the first two years of life (1,000 days) and its long-term impact.

The researchers note that nutritional status during this period may program child and adult health risks, including obesity, hypertension, and diabetes. Calories are essential for fetal and child growth, but are not adequate for normal [brain](#) development. Protein, zinc, iron, choline, folate, iodine, vitamins A, D, B₆, and B₁₂, and long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids are key nutrients that support neurodevelopment. During the critical period of [brain development](#), failure to provide key nutrients may result in lifelong deficits in brain function, despite subsequent repletion of nutrients. Pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants, and toddlers should be referred to existing services for nutrition support. All providers caring for children should advocate for healthy diets in the first 1,000 days.

"Prioritizing public policies that ensure the provision of adequate nutrients and [healthy eating](#) during this crucial time would ensure that all children have an early foundation for optimal neurodevelopment, a key factor in long-term health," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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