

PUFA formula supplementation doesn't up infant cognition

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Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

(HealthDay) -- Supplementation of infant formula with long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids (LCPUFAs) is not associated with improved cognition; and infants fed with milk- or soy protein-based formula have similar cognitive development scores, which are slightly lower than those of breastfed infants, according to two studies published online May 28 in *Pediatrics*.

Ahmad Qawasmi, M.D., from Yale University in New Haven, Conn., and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis to investigate the efficacy of LCPUFA supplementation of infant formula on early [cognitive development](#) in 12 trials involving 1,802 infants. The researchers found that LCPUFA supplementation had no significant impact on [infant cognition](#). In secondary analysis there was no significant effect of dosing or prematurity status on the efficacy of supplementation.

Aline Andres, Ph.D., from the Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center in Little Rock, and colleagues characterized the developmental status of 391 healthy infants who were breastfed, milk-based formula-fed (MF), or soy protein-based formula-fed (SF) during the first year of life. The researchers found that there were no differences between the MF and SF infants. On the Mental Developmental Index score at 6 and 12 months, [breastfed infants](#) scored slightly higher than formula-fed infants. Breastfed infants also had slightly higher Psychomotor Development Index and Preschool Language Scale-3 scores.

"In this unique study, we established that SF infants perform within normal limits and similarly to MF infants in the areas of mental, psychomotor, and language development," Andres and colleagues conclude. "Our results also suggest a slight potential advantage of cognitive development for breastfed infants."

One author of the Andres study is on the Science Advisory Board of the Soy Nutrition Institute.

More information: [Abstract - Andres](#)
[Abstract - Qawasmi](#)
[Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)
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