

2008-01-01

## Maternal Awareness of the Association Between Paediatric Diet and Adult Disease Risk: A Follow-Up to the DIT-Coombe Hospital Study.

Qianling Zhou

*Technological University Dublin, qianling.zhou@tudublin.ie*

Katherine Younger

*Technological University Dublin*

John Kearney

*Technological University Dublin, john.kearney@tudublin.ie*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://arrow.tudublin.ie/scschbiocon>



Part of the [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Q. Zhou, K. M. Younger and J. M. Kearney (). Maternal awareness of the association between paediatric diet and adult disease risk: A follow-up to the DIT-Coombe Hospital Study. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 67, E432 doi:10.1017/S0029665108009683

This Conference Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Biological, Health and Sports Sciences at ARROW@TU Dublin. It has been accepted for inclusion in Conference Papers by an authorized administrator of ARROW@TU Dublin. For more information, please contact [arrow.admin@tudublin.ie](mailto:arrow.admin@tudublin.ie), [aisling.coyne@tudublin.ie](mailto:aisling.coyne@tudublin.ie), [vera.kilshaw@tudublin.ie](mailto:vera.kilshaw@tudublin.ie).

Funder: Postgraduate R& D Skill, Strand I

*Antenna & High Frequency Research Centre*

*Conference Papers*

---

*Dublin Institute of Technology*

*Year 2008*

---

Maternal Awareness of the Association  
Between Paediatric Diet and Adult  
Disease Risk: A Follow-Up to the  
DIT-Coombe Hospital Study.

Qianling Zhou\*

Katherine Younger†

John Kearney‡

\*Dublin Institute of Technology, qianling.zhou@dit.ie

†Dublin Institute of Technology, katherine.younger@dit.ie

‡Dublin Institute of Technology, john.kearney@dit.ie

This paper is posted at ARROW@DIT.

<http://arrow.dit.ie/ahfrcon/6>

---

## — Use Licence —

---

### Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 1.0

You are free:

- to copy, distribute, display, and perform the work
- to make derivative works

Under the following conditions:

- Attribution.  
You must give the original author credit.
- Non-Commercial.  
You may not use this work for commercial purposes.
- Share Alike.  
If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under a license identical to this one.

For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work. Any of these conditions can be waived if you get permission from the author.

Your fair use and other rights are in no way affected by the above.

---

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike License. To view a copy of this license, visit:

- URL (human-readable summary):  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/1.0/>
  - URL (legal code):  
<http://creativecommons.org/worldwide/uk/translated-license>
-

## Maternal awareness of the association between paediatric diet and adult disease risk: A follow-up to the DIT–Coombe Hospital Study

Q. Zhou, K. M. Younger and J. M. Kearney

School of Biological Sciences, Dublin Institute of Technology, Kevin Street, Dublin 8, Republic of Ireland

Chronic disease has been traditionally attributed to risk factors in adulthood; however, current orthodoxy suggests that the true origins of such diseases are initiated much earlier in life from inappropriate nutritional circumstances arising during the formative years<sup>(1)</sup>. The present study was undertaken to examine current maternal attitudes towards the importance of paediatric diet in relation to adult diseases and to determine the extent to which attitudinal differences between subgroups in the population exist.

A non-randomised postal follow-up survey to the DIT–Coombe Hospital Infant Feeding Study was carried out, involving the recruitment of 209 mothers from a pool sample of 520 mothers in the previous study<sup>(2)</sup> (response rate 46.7%). Quantitative data were obtained from a cross-sectional questionnaire ranking maternal attitudes towards infant diet on a five-point Likert scale<sup>(3)</sup> (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) of perceived importance.

In general, a higher percentage of respondents (64) had a cumulative positive view of the relationship between paediatric diet and disease risk. Of the mothers >70% expressed a strong positive attitude towards the influence of early childhood diet and the risk of being overweight, poor growth and development, unhealthy food preference, osteoporosis, diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. In comparison, cancer, eczema and food allergies were viewed positively overall but the extent to which individuals most strongly agreed with each fell to <50%. The majority had a negative opinion (either disagreed strongly or tended to disagree) of the importance of paediatric diet in mental health problems. According to one-way ANOVA analysis, attitudinal differences in mean scores ( $P < 0.05$ ) were observed in mothers according to age at time of birth, education level, accommodation status and health insurance status, as well as the timing of weaning (Table).

Subgroups	Mean score	<i>P</i>	Diseases perceived to be influenced by infant diet
Age at time of birth (years)			
15–24	3.00	0.001	Heart disease
25–34	3.77		
>34	4.04		
Education level			
Primary or secondary level	3.93	0.012	Unhealthy food preference
Vocational or training course, VEC or FAS	4.02		
Third level including postgraduate	4.27		
Accommodation status			
House or apartment owners	4.30	0.030	Overweight
Non-house or apartment owners	3.97		
Health insurance status			
Public	3.95	0.018	Unhealthy food preference
Semi-public	4.26		
Private	4.34		
Timing of weaning			
≤12 weeks	3.59	0.032	Diabetes
>12 weeks	4.00		

VEC, Vocational Education Committee; FAS, Training and Employment Authority.

The results indicate that mothers who are younger and less educated, as well as those who wean their child before 12 weeks after birth should be targeted for further health education on the specific benefits of infant diet, which may in turn contribute towards relieving the strain of chronic disease on society.

1. Barker DJP, Erikson JG, Forsen T & Osmond C (2002) *Int J Epidemiol* **31**, 1235–1239.
2. Tarrant RC, Younger K, Sheridan-Periera M & Kearney JM (2007) *Proc Nutr Soc* **66**, 54A.
3. Nayak L & Erinjeri JP (2008) *Acad Radiol* **15**, 383–389.