

Compound in Breast Milk Fights Harmful Bacteria

Simple, Inexpensive Compound Could Be Added to Formula or Cow's Milk

National Jewish Health

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DOCTOR BITES

CG: Donald Y. Leung, MD
National Jewish Health

Dr. Leung explains how GML may prevent eczema:
"GML or glycerol monolaurate has a very special activity, it kills Staph aureus. We know Staph aureus is driving allergic disease. There's multiple studies now in birth cohorts that find the appearance of Staph aureus on the skin precedes the development of atopic dermatitis."

Dr. Leung explains that GML kills bad bacteria and maintains good bacteria in the skin:
"We really want to control the microbiome. It turns out glycerol monolaurate, which is made in human breast milk, is selective in killing Staph aureus and it maintains some of the beneficial bacteria in the skin."

Dr. Leung explains that GML is in breast milk, but not in cow's milk or formula:
"What we found was human breast milk selectively has GML in it. It's not present in cow's milk or formula. And, the GML was very potent at killing at Staph aureus."

Dr. Leung lists other sources of GML besides breast milk:
"It's found in a lot of oils. The issue really is, what is the amount of GML you really need in order to make your microbiome better?"

Dr. Leung says GML is not in cow's milk or formula:
"Cow's milk; which many children are drinking, or formulas, have absolutely no GML in it. Whereas, breast milk is very high in GML."

Dr. Leung explains that GML maintains a healthy microbiome:
"Right now we know that GML kills Staph aureus, but not the good bacteria."

Dr. Leung explains a new reason breastfeeding is important:
"Breast milk is really god sent. Right? It's free, as long as the mother feels that way, and it has many benefits. It has nutrients that you need and it boosts the immune system. But, now we've added a very potent reason why you should breastfeed for at least three to six months; and

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that is that it reduces Staph aureus in the body.”

Dr. Leung explains why staph aureus is a bad bacteria:
“Staph aureus is a bad bacteria that we know causes allergy, including atopic dermatitis. We think it may cause food allergy and it's the most common cause of invasive skin infections.”

Dr. Leung says GML could become an additive in baby formula:
“The GML could be added to breast milk, or cow's milk, or any food that people are eating that is deficient in GML and that might help control Staph aureus in the body.”

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1800 West 5th Ave.
Columbus, Ohio 43212
Phone: (614) 932-9950 Fax: (614) 932-9920
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