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Food allergies may be due to mom's habits during preganacy

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Singapore: Scientists at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Melbourne have established a striking link between childhood food allergies and habits of the mother during pregnancy. The study reveals that allergies can start to develop even before a baby is born and may be influenced by their mother's behaviors during her pregnancy.

The study conducted in 24 children, showed key differences in blood samples of babies who have food allergies and babies who don't providing a vital clue to identify the cause of such allergies in neonates.

Dr David Martino, author of report, said that when compared the blood samples of 12-month-old babies, the samples from infants with allergies had molecular pathways that operated differently. He added that there was an association with food allergies and disruption of molecular switches that control gene expression.

Further they found that majority of the children exhibited these molecular differences during birth. He mentioned that this finding would help researchers investigate how exposure to certain factors during pregnancy alter gene behavior.

Report co-author Katie Allen added that the study would be extended to find what triggers the disruption of molecular switches, and those factors would be evaluated, to alter the risk of babies developing allergies.