Effect of hydrolysed formula feeding on taste preferences at 10 years. Data from the German Infant Nutritional Intervention Program Plus Study.

BACKGROUND & AIMS: There is some evidence that the type of infant formula received in early infancy has an influence on later food preferences. How long potential effects of taste programming persist is however not clear. Therefore, the aim of present study was to investigate whether feeding with different kinds of infant formula is associated with the acceptance of infant formula at 10 years of age. METHODS: Preference testing was conducted in 833 10-year old children being part of the interventional subgroup of the German Infant Nutritional Intervention Program Plus Study (GINIplus). If they were not exclusively breastfed, these children have been fed with either one of three hydrolysed formulas or a cow’s milk formula during the first four months of life. RESULTS: Feeding with any kind of hydrolysed formula in infancy was positively associated with a higher acceptance of extensively hydrolysed casein formula (aOR: 1.88; 95% CI 1.08, 3.29) after adjusting for sex and study centre. CONCLUSIONS: Although this study did not show consistent associations and thus leaves some questions unanswered, it might stimulate further research on the potential programming effect of early infant feeding.