

Thème 3 – Corps humain et santé

3-A – Le maintien de l'intégrité de l'organisme : quelques aspects de la réponse immunitaire

Immune retune: Never too young

Using documents and your knowledge, you will explain how lifestyle can strengthen immune systems from the youngest age.



Doc 1: Breastfeeding

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- 1 Doc 2: What better way to engineer the perfect immune system than to start from scratch? While you can't do that for yourself, you can with your children. In the womb, babies automatically share their mother's antibodies, which cross the placenta. This antibody donation can continue after birth through breastfeeding.
- 5 Breast milk is chock-full of immune-boosting ingredients. There is lactoferrin, for instance – a protein that inhibits the growth of bacteria – and sugars that block bacteria from binding to the body's cells. Breastfeeding reduces infection rates, particularly in the developing world. There is another way of furnishing a child's immune system with first-class defenses that is quick, relatively cheap and arguably one of medicine's greatest achievements: vaccination against a dozen
- 10 or more fatal diseases, available at a clinic near you. Unfortunately, some anti-vaccine campaigners claim this amounts to "overloading" the immune system – an idea that has no basis in fact considering the millions of microbes we face down in every speck of dirt. The few antigens within a vaccine, even multiple vaccines given at once, are a hardly appreciable added burden, according to the World Health Organization: "Considering the millions of
- 15 germs in every speck* of dirt, a few vaccines at once cannot overload the immune system". Some childhood diseases, though, are caused by immune defenses going into overdrive, including asthma, eczema and allergies to pollen or foods. We know that children are less likely to get such allergic conditions if they grow in a varied environment and in touch with the natural elements. Breast milk, vaccines and playing in the mud is our prescription for child health.

<https://www.newscientist.com/round-up/immune-retune>

*speck of dirt: grain de poussière