



MEDIA RELEASE

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Researchers predict 13% reduction in teenage obesity with lower protein infant formula

Munich, 6 May 2010 – In the EU Childhood Obesity Project (CHOP) over 1000 infants were followed over a 2 year period. The first results show that, after 2 years, the infants fed a formula milk with a lower protein content – closer to the composition of breast milk - weighed significantly less than those on higher protein formula, with their weights being more similar to those of breast fed infants.

These differences emerged by 6 months of age and persisted, even after the intervention ceased and the children went onto similar diets.

The researchers predict that these low protein induced differences in early growth would reduce obesity at 14-16 years of age by 13%.

Follow-up to the CHOP Project co-ordinated by Professor Koletzko has continued under the auspices of the EC funded 5-year EARNEST Early Nutrition Programming Project. Results from EARNEST and CHOP are being presented at *The Power of Programming* international conference (6-8 May 2010) in Munich.

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The Power of Programming (6-8 May) Munich a landmark international conference on the science of Early Nutrition Programming. Full details of speakers and sessions at www.metabolic-programming.org/munich2010/index.htm

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU), Munich one of the oldest in Germany, is at the forefront of research into metabolic programming with the EC funded EARNEST project (www.metabolic-programming.org), co-ordinated by Professor Berthold Koletzko of the University Children's hospital. The Power of Programming conference, organised by EARNEST, is bringing together leading experts from around the world to discuss the effect of nutrition and other environmental influences during early life on long term outcomes such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, and chronic lung disease, behavioural and cognitive problems.

The EARNEST Project is being carried out with financial support of the European Commission under the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Technical Development (FOOD-CT-2005-007036). It does not necessarily reflect the EC views and, in no way, anticipates future policy in this area.

EARNEST has included follow-up studies from the EU Childhood Obesity Project (CHOP) a multi-centre intervention trial in five European countries. Over 1000 infants were randomised to receive infant and follow-on formulas with lower or higher protein content for their first year and were then followed up for 2 years. A group of breast fed infants were also followed up for comparison. Study Results were published last year (Koletzko *et al.*, 2009) (Schiess *et al.*, 2009)
