



Media Backgrounder

- **The EARNEST Research Consortium** (The Early Nutrition Programming Project ENPP) funded by the European Commission brings together a multi-disciplinary team of scientists from European research institutions in an integrated programme of work including experimental studies in humans, modern prospective observational studies; and mechanistic animal work including physiological studies, cell culture models and molecular techniques. The ENPP consortium consists of a multi-disciplinary team of 40 partners (33 academic institutions, 3 industry, 4 small/medium-sized enterprises) in 17 EU countries with a coordinating centre in Munich. The project commenced in April 2005 and runs for 5 years.
- **Nutrition during pregnancy and infancy** can exert important long-term effects on health and development - obesity, cardio-vascular disease, diabetes and cognitive development may all be implicated.
- **Early Nutrition Programming & Health Outcomes in Later Life: Obesity & Beyond** is a major International Conference to address this emerging science with speakers from around the world, many engaged with the EC-funded EARNEST project. Original research will be presented by invited international experts as well as by young scientists.

Key Announcements

- **Early feeding in infancy and later growth** – the results from the European Childhood Obesity project will provide key data for policy-makers, healthcare professionals, consumer groups and the infant food industry. Do babies fed on formula containing high protein get fatter than those fed on formula containing lower protein content or breast fed babies? The results will demand a re-think from all stakeholders on early infant feeding and expectations of growth in the first year of life (to be presented by Professor Bert Koletzko, EARNEST Project Co-coordinator – Friday 20 – 16.30).
- **Inconsistency to be revealed across Europe on advice** to families on nutrition in pregnancy and early infancy and its impact on health and development. Policy documents, leaflets and information in magazines and on websites across 5 EC countries do not give enough detailed or consistent information to enable parents to make the best decisions on nutrition & early infant feeding for themselves and their families (presentations to be co-coordinated by Dr Monique Raats, EARNEST Theme 4 leader – Saturday 21 – 08.15).
- The **emerging science of Early Nutrition Programming and its results** must be built into policy and practice for the benefit of the long-term health of all citizens. The Hungarian experience of reduced life expectancy, CVD & increased rates of obesity will be presented.

Further Topics

- **Genetic origins of obesity in later life – can these be established by the early environment?** (Lucilla Poston – Saturday 21 – B4 14.15)
- **The balance between physical activity & body weight gain – when is this established?** (David Gardner – Saturday 21 – B4 14.15)
- **Supplementing maternal diets with fish oil – what are the effects?** (Tamas Decsi – Saturday 21 – A4 14.15)
- **Obese children – impact on availability of essential nutrients** (S Bokor – Friday 20 – A1 14.30)
- **Breastfeeding and atherosclerosis** (Atul Singhal – Saturday 21 – B3 10.45)