

ORGANIC FOODS FOR YOUR BABY?

source: www.theorganicreport.com, contributed by Sue Gilbert, MS Nutritionist

In my work as a nutritionist, parents often ask me if it is "worth it" to buy organic foods for their children. My response is always a resounding "yes!" There are several excellent reasons to feed organic food to your children. Some of these reasons were cited in a 1993 report published by The National Academy of Science entitled "Pesticides in the Diets of Infants and Children." The report concluded that current government pesticide standards do not protect the health of children.

1. Babies' bodies are much more vulnerable to pesticides because their brains, immune and detoxification systems are immature and in a state of development.
2. Pound for pound babies eat two to four times more vegetables and fruits than adults and so are exposed to a higher proportion of possible contaminants.
3. The health effects of chronic low level exposure to pesticide residues are still unknown.

A subsequent report released by the Environmental Working Group, "Pesticides in Children's Food" concluded that the largest contribution to a person's lifetime risk of cancer from pesticide residues occurs during childhood.

Organic foods are grown without the use of pesticides. Standards for safe pesticide use in foods have been based on adult tolerance levels. When selecting foods to feed your baby it makes sense to avoid foods with pesticides, since babies are far more vulnerable to the toxic effects of pesticides because of their small size and immature digestive and detoxification system.

Organic meat is meat derived from animals that have been raised on organic feed and have not been treated with hormones or antibiotics, the residues of which may end up in the meat.

Some important, more indirect reasons to feed your children organic food are the fact that it supports the growth of organic farming. This in turn helps protect the health of the environment. It will help to keep pesticides out of the earth and water supply and will help preserve the planet for them and their children.

Unfortunately, the cost of organic food is not yet competitive with conventionally grown foods. However, the long-term savings found in good health and a clean environment can more than offset this cost in the long run. Therefore, it's worth the extra money to buy organic food, at least while your infant is still so little and vulnerable. Look at purchasing organic foods for your baby as a savings plan ... an investment in your child's health.



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