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Title: Development of immune responses in early life : a longitudinal study in Indonesia

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STELLINGEN

1. Young children living in an environment rich in pathogens develop a strong TH₂-type response, yet they do not have increased prevalence of skin test reactivity (this thesis).
2. IgE measurement cannot be used for diagnosis of allergic diseases in Indonesia (this thesis).
3. Low maternal education is negatively associated with skin prick test reactivity to allergens, even after adjustment for maternal helminth infections (this thesis).
4. In the first year of life, the strong association between mother and child cytokine responses cannot be explained by single nucleotide gene polymorphisms alone (this thesis).
5. BCG induces both general and specific TH₁ and TH₂-type responses in children in Indonesia (this thesis).
6. Besides its protective effect against severe forms of tuberculosis, BCG vaccination may have a positive bystander impact on morbidity and mortality in childhood (Aaby P and Benn CS, *PNAS* 2012; 109: 17317-8).
7. In poor-resource settings, whole blood culture can be the best method to assess innate and adaptive immune responses from infants and young children (Eriksson M. et al, *Clin Exp Immunol.* 2007; 150:469-76).
8. Research focused on understanding how epigenetic modifications in early life affect health outcomes later may be more productive in Indonesia than in affluent countries, due to the highly diverse environmental conditions.
9. The Indonesian health care system should focus on maternal health during pregnancy and lactation for generations of healthy children and grandchildren.
10. A mother is not a person to lean on, but a person to make leaning unnecessary (Dorothy Canfield Fisher).
11. Skype allows maintaining a close mother-child relationship across 2 continents.