

Kathleen Rasmussen

Web Bio

Information

Biography

Biographical Statement

Dr. Kathleen M. Rasmussen is Professor of Nutrition in the Division of Nutritional Sciences and International Professor of Nutritional Science at Cornell University. She received her AB degree from Brown University in molecular biology and both her ScM and ScD degrees from Harvard University in nutrition. Professor Rasmussen is internationally known for her research on maternal and child nutrition. Her research has included studies in experimental species, observational and intervention studies in human subjects in the US and several developing countries, and epidemiologic studies based on data from medical records and large cohorts. She and her students have established that interventions to improve maternal nutritional status can increase the volume and improve the composition of human milk and, thereby, improve infant nutritional status. They have also shown that women who are overweight or obese at conception have problems establishing and maintaining breastfeeding and have babies who are heavier at one year of age than those of normal-weight women. Her research has been supported by NIH, USDA and numerous other organizations. Professor Rasmussen has been a member of several expert committees at the Institute of Medicine, served as the chair of the Committee on Reexamination of IOM Pregnancy Weight Guidelines, and current the Chair of the Committee to Review WIC Food Packages. Her research was recognized by the Agnes Higgins Award of the American Public Health Association in 2012.

Professor Rasmussen has served as program director for Cornell's NIH-sponsored training grant in maternal and child nutrition since 1987 and for 6 years also directed a training grant from NIH's Fogarty International Center that supported international trainees. She has taught a nationally recognized course in maternal and child nutrition for graduate students since 1980 and has taught a unique course on public health nutrition for undergraduate students since 1998. In 2006, she was the first recipient of the Excellence in Nutrition Education Award from the American Society for Nutrition. Continuing her long interest in mentoring the future leaders in nutrition, Dr. Rasmussen serves as the principal faculty member at the Dannon Nutrition Leadership Institute, which she helped to develop in 1998. She received the Dannon Institute Mentorship Award from the American Society for Nutrition in 2009.

Professor Rasmussen has served as the Secretary and then the President of the American Society of Nutritional Sciences (now the American Society for Nutrition) and also as the President of the International Society for Research on Human Milk

and Lactation. She has previously been the Associate Dean and Secretary of the University Faculty and a member of Cornell's Board of Trustees (2004-2008), elected by the University Faculty.

Teaching

Teaching and Advising Statement

Professor Rasmussen teaches a graduate course on maternal and child nutrition (NS6140) in the fall semester and an undergraduate course on public health nutrition (NS4500) in the spring semester. She advises graduate students in Nutrition and undergraduate students in the Nutrition and Human Biology, Health and Society major; she also advises undergraduates in research.

Professional

Current Professional Activities

- Cornell University Graduate Field Memberships: Nutrition, Epidemiology
- Program Director, "Training in Maternal and Child Nutrition", NIH/NICHD
- Chair, Committee to Review WIC Food Packages, Institute of Medicine, National Academies
- Principal Faculty Member, Dannon Nutrition Leadership Institute

Research

Current Research Activities

Broadly, we are studying the relationship between maternal nutritional status during the reproductive period and short- and long-term maternal and child health outcomes. In the US and elsewhere, we have been studying the association between maternal obesity and reduced duration of breastfeeding, why this occurs, and the consequences that it has for both maternal health and infant feeding practices. We are also investigating how the now-widespread practice of breast milk expression, specifically how it affects maternal health and infant feeding practices. In addition, we are using the data from the MINIMat study in Bangladesh to investigate factors that influence women's participation in nutritional supplementation programs. With colleagues in Scandinavia, we are studying the effects of reproduction in general, and lactation in particular, on long-term maternal health.

Extension

Education

Education

- NIH Postdoctoral trainee, Cornell University, Nutrition
- Sc.D., Harvard University, Nutrition
- Sc.M., Harvard University, Nutrition
- A.B., Brown University, Molecular Biology

Courses

Courses Taught

NS 4500 Public Health Nutrition

NS 6140 Topics in Maternal and Child Nutrition

Websites

Administration

Administrative Responsibilities

Program Director, Training in Maternal and Child Nutrition, NIH/NICHD

Publications

Selected Publications

Hauff LE, Leonard SA, Rasmussen KM. Associations of maternal obesity and psychosocial factors with breastfeeding intention, initiation and duration. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2014;99:524-534.

Kirkegaard H, Stovring H, Rasmussen KM, Abrams B, Sørensen TIA, Nohr EA. The relationship between pregnancy related weight changes, breastfeeding, and maternal weight and waist circumference 7 y after delivery—a path analysis. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2014;99:312-391.

Brekke HK, Bertz F, Rasmussen KM, Bosaeus I, Ellegård, Winkvist A. Effect of intervention with diet, exercise or both on cardiovascular risk factors in lactating women. *PLoS One* 2014;9:e88250.

Knabl J, Riedel C, Gmach J, Ensenaer R, Brandlhuber L, Rasmussen KM, Schiessl B, von Kries R. Prediction of suboptimal gestational weight gain from week specific cut-off values: a cohort study. *J Perinatol* 2014; 34:351-356.

Bjerregaard LG, Rasmussen KM, Michaelsen KF, Skytthe A, Mortensen EL, Baker JL, Sørensen TIA. Effects of infant weight and weight gain on body mass index from early childhood through adulthood. *Int J Obesity* 2014;38:1305-1311.

Rasmussen KM. Editorial: Helping women to conceive at a healthy weight and gain within the guidelines. *Int J Childbirth Educ* 2014;20:10-11.

Kirkegaard H, Stovring H, Rasmussen KM, Abrams B, Sørensen TIA, Nohr EA. Maternal weight change from prepregnancy throughout 7 years postpartum—the

influence of behavioral factors. Obesity; accepted for publication.

Garner CD, Ratcliff SL, Devine CM, Thornburg LL, Rasmussen KM. Health professionals' experiences providing breastfeeding-related care for obese women. *Breastfeeding Med*; 2014;9:503-509.

Von Kries, R, Chmitorz A, Rasmussen KM, Bayer O, Ensenaer R. Late pregnancy reversal from excessive gestational weight gain lowers risk of childhood overweight—a cohort study. *Obesity*. 2013;21:1232-37.

Stoltzfus RJ, Rasmussen KM. Comment: The dangers of being born too small or too soon. *Lancet*. 2013; 382:380-381.

Rogers AB, Yaktine AL, Rapporteurs, Institute of Medicine and National Research Council (Committee on Implementation of the IOM Pregnancy Weight Gain Guidelines). *Leveraging Action to Support Dissemination of the Pregnancy Weight Gain Guidelines: Workshop Summary*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2013.

Lan-Pidhainy X, Nohr EA, Rasmussen KM. Comparison of gestational weight gain related pregnancy outcomes in American primiparous and multiparous women. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2013; 87:1100-06.

Gardner RM, Kippler M, Tofail F, Bottai M, Hamadani J, Grandér M, Nermell B, Palm B, Rasmussen KM, Vather M. Environmental exposures to metals and children's growth to five years: a prospective cohort study. *Am J Epidemiol*. 2013;177:1356-67. (Editor's Choice)

Saha KK, Hamadani JD, Tofail F, Rasmussen KM, Vahter M. Pre- and postnatal arsenic exposure and child growth to age 2 years: a cohort study in rural Bangladesh. *Environ. Health Perspect*. 2012;120:1208-1214.

Geraghty SR, Sucharew H, Rasmussen KM. Trends in breastfeeding: It's not only at the breast anymore. *Mat Child Nutr*. 2013;9:180-7.

Persson LÅ, Arifeen S, Ekström E-C, Rasmussen KM, Frongillo EA, Yunus M for the MINIMat Study Team. Effects of prenatal multiple micronutrient and early food supplementation on size and birth and mortality among children under five years of age. The MINIMat randomized trial, Bangladesh. *JAMA*. 2012;307:2050-2059.

Frith AL, Naved RT, Persson LA, Rasmussen KM, Frongillo EA. Early invitation to participation in prenatal food supplementation program ameliorates the negative association of food insecurity with quality of maternal-infant feeding interaction. *J Nutr*. 2012;142:1095-1101.

Chimtorz A, von Kries R, Rasmussen KM, Nehring I, Ensenaer R. Do trimester-specific cut-off values predict whether women ultimately stay within the Institute of Medicine/National Research Council guidelines for gestational weight gain? Findings of a retrospective cohort study. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2012;95:1432-1437.

Monterrosa EC, Peltó GH, Frongillo EA, Rasmussen KM. Constructing maternal knowledge frameworks: how mothers conceptualize complementary feeding. *Appetite*. 2012;59:377-384.

Bertz F, Brekke H, Ellegård L, Rasmussen KM, Wennergren M, Winkvist A. Factorial diet and exercise trial among lactating overweight and obese women. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2012;96:698-705.

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Bahl R, Martines J, Bhandari N, Biloglav Z, Edmond K, Iyengar S, Kramer M, Lawn JE, Manadand DS, Mori R, Rasmussen KM, Sachdev HPS, Singhal N, Tomlinson M, Victora C, Williams AF, Chan KY, Rudan I. Setting research priorities to reduce global mortality from preterm birth and low birth weight by 2015. *J Glob Health*. 2012;2:10403. doi: 10.7189/jogh.02-01040302-010403.

Monterrosa EC, Frongillo EA, Neufeld LM, Egan KA, Ramakrishnan U, Rasmussen KM. Maternal pre-pregnancy body mass index is not associated with infant and young child feeding in low-income Mexican children 1-24 mo old. *Mat Child Nutr J*. 2012 Oct 15. doi: 10.1111/j.1740-8709.2012.00461.x. [Epub ahead of print]

Kronborg H, Vaeth M, Rasmussen KM. Obesity and early cessation of breastfeeding in Denmark. *Eur J Public Health* 2013;23:316-22.

Dieterich CM, Felice JP, O'Sullivan E, Rasmussen KM. Breastfeeding and health outcomes for the mother-infant dyad. *Pediatr Clin N Am*. 2013;60:31-48.

Rasmussen KM. Public health policies related to obesity in childbearing women. In: Gillman MD, Poston L, eds. *Maternal Obesity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012, pp. 237-242 (Chapter 19).

Leonard SA, Labiner-Wolfe J, Geraghty SR, Rasmussen KM. Associations among high prepregnancy body mass index, breast pumping and breastfeeding outcomes. *Am J Clin Nutr*. 2011;93:556-563.

Leonard SA, Rasmussen KM. Larger infant size at birth reduces the negative association between maternal prepregnancy body mass index and breastfeeding duration. *J Nutr*. 2011;141:645-653.

Rasmussen KM, Dieterich CM, Zelek ST, Altabet JD, Kjolhede CL. Interventions to increase the duration of breastfeeding in obese mothers: The Bassett Improving Breastfeeding Study. *Breastfeeding Med*. 2011;6:69-75.

Geraghty SR, Heier JE, Rasmussen KM. Got milk? Sharing human milk via the internet. *Publ Health Rep*. 2011;126:161-164.

Rasmussen KM, Geraghty SR. The quiet revolution: breastfeeding transformed with the use of breast pumps. *Am J Public Health* 2011;101:1356-1359.

Rasmussen KM, Abrams B. Gestational weight gain and later maternal health: are they related? [editorial] *Am J Clin Nutr* 2011;93:1186-1187.

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Geraghty SR, Rasmussen KM. Redefining “breastfeeding” initiation and duration in the age of breast milk pumping. *Breastfeeding Med*. 2010;5:135-137.

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Rasmussen KM, Kjolhede C. Maternal obesity: a problem for both mother and child. *Obesity.* 2008;16:929-931. Rasmussen KM. Association of maternal obesity before conception with poor lactational performance. *Annu Rev Nutr* 2007;27:103-21.

Baker JL, Michaelsen KF, Sørensen TIA, Rasmussen KM. High prepregnant body mass index is associated with early termination of full and any breastfeeding among Danish women. *Am J Clin Nutr* 2007;86:404-11.

Nøhr EA, Bech BH, Væth M, Rasmussen KM, Hendriksen TB, Olsen J. Obesity, gestational weight gain and preterm birth. A study within the Danish National Birth Cohort. *Pædiatr Perinat Epidemiol* 2007;21:5-14.

Rasmussen KM. Maternal obesity and the outcome of breastfeeding. In: Hale TW, Hartmann PE, eds. *Hale & Hartmann's Textbook on Human Lactation.* Amarillo, TX: Hale Publishing, 2007, pp. 387-402 (Chapter 20).

Hilson JA, Rasmussen KM, Kjolhede CL. Excessive weight gain during pregnancy is associated with earlier termination of breastfeeding among white women. *J Nutr* 2006;136:140-146.

Rasmussen KM, Lee VE, Ledkovsky TB, Kjolhede CL. A description of counseling practices that are used with obese mothers. *J Hum Lac* 2006;22:322-327.

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improves lactational performance in obese rats. In: *Bioactive Components of Human Milk*, Newburg DS, ed. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2001.

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