

Universal investment in infants and long-run health: Evidence from Denmark's 1937 home visiting program ^[1]

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Abstract

This paper provides the first estimates of the long-run health effects of a universal infant health intervention. We examine the 1937 Danish home visiting program, which targeted all infants. Using administrative population data and exploiting variation in the timing of implementation across municipalities, we find that treated individuals are 5-8 percent less likely to die in middle age (45-57), experience fewer hospital nights and are less likely to be diagnosed with and die from cardiovascular disease. These results suggest that an improved nutrition and disease environment in infancy "programmed" individuals for lower predisposition to serious adult diseases.

Region: Europe ^[3]

Tags: health ^[4]

outcomes ^[5]

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