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1: [J Allergy Clin Immunol](#). 2006 Jan;117(1):59-66. Epub 2005 Nov 28.

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Allergic disease and sensitization in Steiner school children.

[Floistrup H](#), [Swartz J](#), [Bergstrom A](#), [Alm JS](#), [Scheynius A](#), [van Hage M](#), [Waser M](#), [Braun-Fahrlander C](#), [Schram-Bijkerk D](#), [Huber M](#), [Zutavern A](#), [von Mutius E](#), [Ublagger E](#), [Riedler J](#), [Michaels KB](#), [Perschagen G](#), [The Parsifal Study Group](#).

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BACKGROUND: The anthroposophic lifestyle has several features of interest in relation to allergy: for example, a restrictive use of antibiotics and certain vaccinations. In a previous Swedish study, Steiner school children (who often have an anthroposophic lifestyle) showed a reduced risk of atopy, but specific protective factors could not be identified. **OBJECTIVE:** To investigate factors that may contribute to the lower risk of allergy among Steiner school children. **METHODS:** Cross-sectional multicenter study including 6630 children age 5 to 13 years (4606 from Steiner schools and 2024 from reference schools) in 5 European countries. **RESULTS:** The prevalence of several studied outcomes was lower in Steiner school children than in the reference group. Overall, there were statistically significant reduced risks for rhinoconjunctivitis, atopic eczema, and atopic sensitization (allergen-specific IgE \geq or $=$ 0.35 kU/L), with some heterogeneity between the countries. Focusing on doctor-diagnosed disease, use of antibiotics during first year of life was associated with increased risks of rhinoconjunctivitis (odds ratio [OR], 1.97; 95% CI, 1.26-3.08), asthma (OR, 2.79; 95% CI, 2.03-3.83), and atopic eczema (OR, 1.63; 95% CI, 1.22-2.17). Early use of antipyretics was related to an increased risk of asthma (OR, 1.54; 95% CI, 1.11-2.13) and atopic eczema (OR, 1.32; 95% CI, 1.02-1.71). Children having received measles, mumps, and rubella vaccination showed an increased risk of rhinoconjunctivitis, whereas measles infection was associated with a lower risk of IgE-mediated eczema. **CONCLUSION:** Certain features of the anthroposophic lifestyle, such as restrictive use

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of antibiotics and antipyretics, are associated with a reduced risk of allergic disease in children.

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