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## Breastfeeding and dietary habits

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**Objective:** To test whether there are differences in diversity in the diet of children still being partly breastfed at 9 months compared with those completely weaned at the same age.

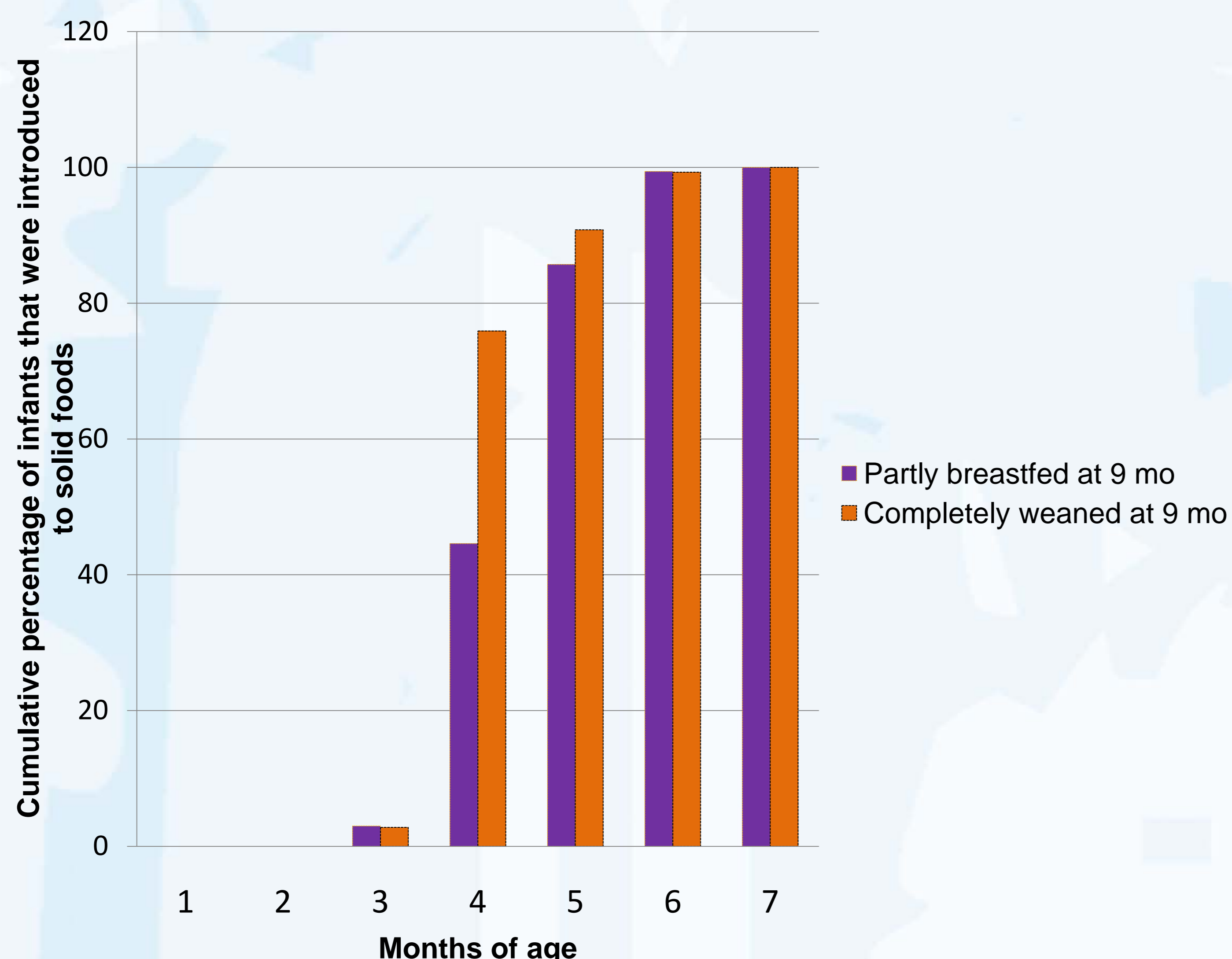
**Methods/Design:** 312 healthy term infants with the age of 9 months (9.1 ± 0.3) were examined in a cross-sectional study (SKOT-cohort) in the area of Copenhagen, Denmark.

**Results:** The infants partly breastfed (n=168) at 9 months had a significantly lower bodyweight (<0.0001), were significantly shorter (P=0.0022), and were introduced to complementary foods significantly later than completely weaned infants (n=141) (<0.0001) of similar age (Fig. 1). Furthermore, they had a lower intake of energy, both in absolute amounts (P<0.0001) and analyzed per kilogram of bodyweight (P=0.049). A significantly lower intake of most energy yielding nutrients, in both absolute amounts and as energy percentages, was seen for the partly breastfed compared to the completely weaned infants. Only small differences were found for absolute intakes of foods, although fatty spread showed significantly higher intake rates and consumption (P=0.0004) among partly breastfed compared with completely weaned infants (Table 1).\*

**Table 1.** Daily intakes of foods and drinks and percentages of consumers among 9-month-old partly breastfed and completely weaned infants (median, 25th and 75th percentiles)

Food group	Intake				P value*
	Partly breastfed at 9 mo (n=168)		Completely weaned at 9 mo (n=141)		
	% consuming	Median (P <sub>25</sub> , P <sub>75</sub> )	% consuming	Median (P <sub>25</sub> , P <sub>75</sub> )	
<b>Drinks</b>					
Breast milk	100	80 (80, 355)	0	-	<0.0001
Formula	48	0 (0, 114)	92	377 (231, 477)	<0.0001
Follow-on formula	8	0 (0, 0)	28	0 (0, 36)	<0.0001
Cow milk (drinking)	71	36 (0, 109)	79	46 (5, 118)	<0.0001
Juice/squash/soft drinks	13	0 (0, 0)	20	0 (0, 0)	0.748
<b>Foods</b>					
Porridge	99		99		
Homemade	93	105 (47, 170)	89	107 (43, 171)	0.936
Industrial	48	0 (0, 43)	53	11 (0, 64)	0.026
Fruit pure	74		82		
Homemade	55	4.5(0, 29)	58	7.1(0, 36)	0.729
Industrial	47	0 (0, 21)	55	7 (0, 36)	0.0013
Vegetable pure	82		81		
Homemade	71	33 (0, 98)	74	36 (0, 100)	0.983
Industrial	35	0 (0, 17)	40	0 (0, 25)	0.267
Bread	96	23 (11, 39)	98	26 (13, 39)	0.074
Fatty spread	85	3 (1, 4)	81	2 (0, 4)	0.031
Vegetables/veg. products	99	35 (18, 55)	99	33 (19, 57)	0.918
Fruit in pieces	98	57 (28, 89)	94	58 (30, 91)	0.820
Meat/meat products	96	12 (5, 22)	99	16 (7, 26)	0.163
Fish/fish products	88	5 (2, 10)	88	5 (2, 11)	0.443

\*Comparing breastfeeding groups adjusted for weight of the infant, mother's age, mother's education and number of persons in the household.



**Fig. 1.** Cumulative percentage of partly breastfed at 9 mo and completely weaned infants at 9 mo with introduction of complementary foods, per month.

**Conclusions:** At 9 months the infants partly breastfed did not eat less diversified compared to those completely weaned at the same age. Despite later introduction to complementary foods than those completely weaned, their intake of foods was similar and no delay in their progression towards the family foods was noted.