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Dr. Anupama Singh

PG Scholar, Department of
Materia Medica, State
National Homeopathic
Medical College and Hospital,
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh,
India

Dr. Monika Yadav

PG Scholar, Department of
Repertory, State National
Homeopathic Medical College
and Hospital, Lucknow, Uttar
Pradesh, India

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Anupama Singh

PG Scholar, Department of
Materia Medica, State
National Homeopathic
Medical College and Hospital,
Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh,
India

Homeopathic approach to food allergy

Dr. Anupama Singh and Dr. Monika Yadav

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Abstract

The term "food allergy" refers to an adverse immunological reaction to a particular food. Allergy caused by certain food gives an unpleasant response to the immune system and is linked through a wide variety of clinical features which may contain any tissue or part of the body, including the integumentary system, alimentary tracts, and organs involved in breathing and circulatory system. The utmost common cause of an allergic response is a food allergy mediated by the antibody Immunoglobulin E (IgE). This article focuses on the development of the disease as affected by the immune system, its causes, sign and symptoms, and management, and aims at how homeopathic remedies manage such diseases through its holistic approach to treatment.

Keywords: Food allergy, immune system, homeopathy, homeopathic medicines, and anaphylaxis

Introduction

Allergy is defined as a condition of exaggeration of the immune system in certain individuals to some nontoxic substances. The term Allergy was coined by two paediatricians, an Austrian, Clemens von Pirquet, and a Hungarian, Dr. Bela Schick from the Greek words where allos meaning "other" and ergon meaning "activity" to describe hypersensitivity reactions^[1].

Food allergy can be a risk factor for eczema, allergic rhinitis, and asthma called Atopic March in infants/ children. This progression of diseases cannot be experienced by everyone. A harmful immunologic (hypersensitive) reaction toward some foods that can be poisonous is known as a food allergy otherwise nontoxic and thus, many types of pathophysiology can be involved in these food allergy reactions. It can occur only in hypersensitive individuals with the so-called predisposition and where symptoms appear speedily following exposure to such carbohydrates, lipids, and proteins. IgE-mediated and non-IgE mediated are the presentation of food allergy^[2].

Immunopathogenesis and clinical disorder

Investigation of allergenic food proteins and immunologic reactions triggered by innocuous food molecules, and now provides a new approach for the laboratory diagnosis and immunomodulatory control of IgE-mediated food reactions. Now food allergy cases are on the verge of increment day by day and thus become a worldwide problem in developed countries.

Adverse food reactions include any abnormal condition resulting from the ingestion of food and might be the outcome of food intolerances (*nonallergic food*) or food hypersensitivity/allergy.

Food intolerances are adverse reactions caused by some unique physiologic characteristic of the suspected individual, such as metabolic syndrome (e.g., lactose intolerance) which might be due to IgE-or non-IgE-mediated immune pathophysiology. Toxic reactions are due to innate factors of food, such as toxic contaminants (e.g., seafood contaminated with biotoxins) or pharmacologic substances within the food, which can affect most healthy individuals when consumed in appropriate amount. Food aversions are not reproducible when the patient ingests the food in a blinded fashion^[3].

Prevalence of Indian food aversions?

In the Journal of Evolution of Medical and Dental Sciences determined the resulting study of 6,000+ patients Indian in newspaper printed in March 2019 - that the rate of food affected symptoms then causal substances in India differs from the western nation.

In which food allergies in India about 9.25 percent while other countries are 3-7 percent. Cocoa now has 28.21% the highest rate in India. Some food which causing allergies are Cashew nuts, seafood, legumes, and soya beans. Remarkably, in both children and adults, the positive rates for many allergy categories were comparable^[4].

One theory behind the rise in food allergy cases is that a typical child's diet has changed considerably over the past few years. For this Hygiene Hypothesis can be one of the most important causes nowadays.

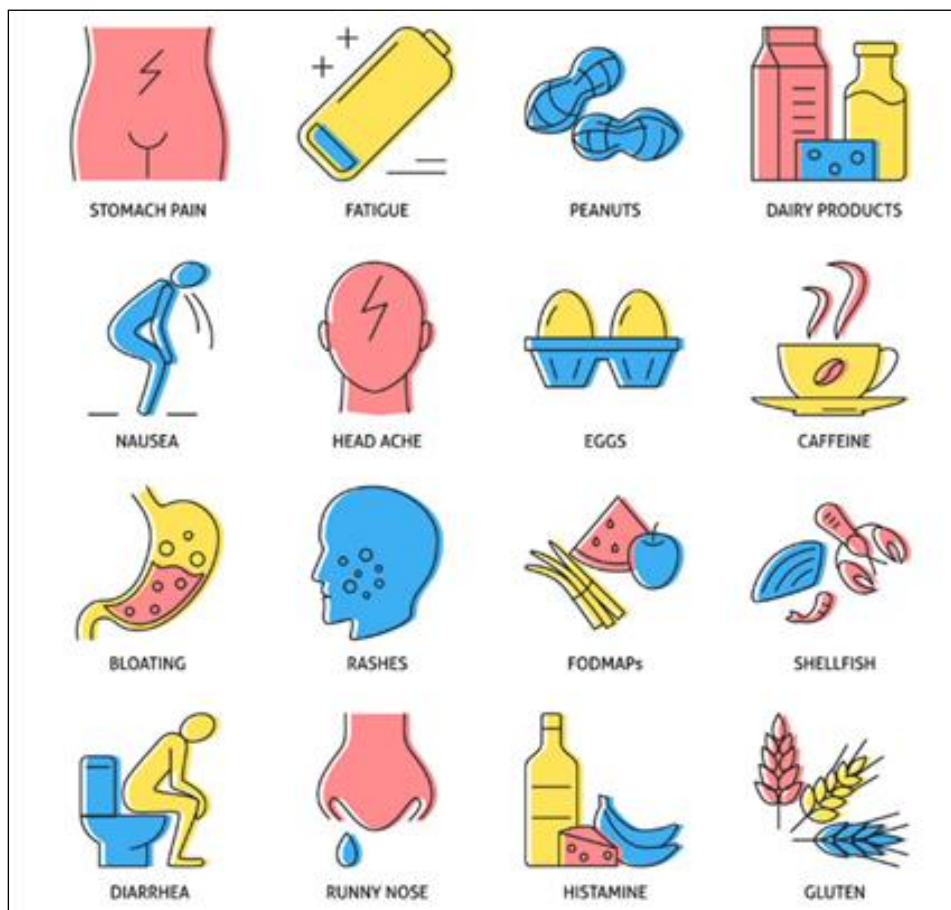
Hygiene Hypothesis

In medicine, the hygiene hypothesis states that early childhood exposure to particular microorganisms (such as gut flora and helminth parasites) protects against allergic

diseases in this way children develops the immune system. Exposure of microorganisms starts *in utero* and ends at 12 to 15 ages. By keeping children at very safest place, at clean environment or not send them to park for playing outdoor games mostly not helps them to develop immunity against many microbes^[5].

Etiology

In most food allergies, the release of mast cells is limited to certain parts of the body, such as the nose, throat, lungs, alimentary tract or skin. Another type of food allergy is non-IgE-mediated food allergy which takes 48hrs to develop allergic symptoms caused by different cells in the immune system.



Foods^[6]

1. In children, the foods that most commonly cause an allergic reaction are:

- Eggs
- Milk – mostly children are having aversions and aggravations to milk
- Soya
- Wheat
- Peanuts

2. In adults, the foods that most commonly cause an allergic reaction are:

- Peanuts
- Tree nuts – such as walnuts, cashew, hazelnuts, almonds.

- Fish
- Shellfish – like crab, mollusc.

3. However, some people have an allergic reaction to:

- Celeriac (celery root) is particularly causing itching of oral mucosa
- Celiac disease occurs due to high rich gluten food
- Mustard
- Sesame seeds
- Fruit and vegetables – some are susceptible and experience oral allergy problems
- Pine nuts (a type of seed)
- Meat – some people are susceptible to just one type of meat, while others are allergic to a range of meats; a common symptom is skin irritation.

Clinical features of food allergy



- A tingling mouth,
- Rashes in the body,
- Swelling of the lips, tongue, face.
- Itching and flushed skin, Low blood pressure etc. symptoms called *anaphylaxis*, depending on the allergen [7].
- Diarrhoea, stomach pain, nausea and vomiting.
- Sometimes indigestion feels by the susceptible one.
- Contaminated food and water results into indigestion irrespective of their immunity.
- Spoiled eggs may cause diarrhoea or vomiting due to indigestion. E.g., by eating cake.
- The severity and onset of the symptom will depend upon the no. of microorganisms and the tissue or organ of susceptible host [8].

Diagnosis of food allergy

- The evaluation of a patient with suspected food allergy begins with obtaining a thorough clinical history, physical examination and with a proper case taking that considers the symptoms of food allergy.
- Skin prick tests (SPT) and/or a serum IgE evaluation specific to foods. Skin prick tests (SPTs) are a fast and reliable method to assess IgE mediated food allergy.
- An oral food challenge (OFC) may also be necessary in some circumstances.⁹
- Component-resolved diagnostics (CRD) uses native or recombinant allergens to detect IgE sensitivity to individual allergen molecules [9].
- It's crucial to consult an allergist or physician to confirm a food allergy's diagnosis.

Management

The best option is to avoid the allergens that trigger the

allergic reaction.

Carefully check ingredients written on the packets of food products, and learn whether what you need to avoid is known by other names.

Declaration regarding (acc. FSSAI regulation) Food allergen [10]: The following foods and ingredients which are known to cause allergy shall be declared separately as Name of allergy-causing ingredients.

| Sr. No. | Food and their products | To be declared as the name |
|---------|--|----------------------------|
| 1. | Cereals containing gluten; i.e., wheat, rye, Amelcorn, barley, spelt, or their hybridized products | cereal |
| 2. | Crustacean and their products | Crustacean |
| 3. | Milk & Milk products | Milk |
| 4. | Eggs and egg products | Egg |
| 5. | Fish and fish products | Fish |
| 6. | Peanuts, tree nuts (e.g., almonds, walnuts, hazelnut, cashew nuts) and their products | Nuts |
| 7. | Soybeans and their products | Soy |
| 8. | Sulphite in concentrations of 10mg/kg or more | Sulphite |

Provided further that this declaration is not required in case of oils derived from these ingredients.” If you wonder about what foods are safe for you to eat, talk with your dietitian or allergist.

Favourite foods are not easy to avoid especially those which are causing some allergies even. Nowadays it becomes easy to understand your allergy and allergens by consulting to dietitians or nutritionist. They will help to improve your health and remove those ingredients which causes you allergy and talks about proper nutrient intake too.

Treatment

Conventional treatment ^[11]

- First-line treatment for anaphylaxis is always *epinephrine*. Anaphylaxis can occur within seconds of exposure to the allergen, can worsen the condition quickly and can be fatal.
- Second-line medications such as *albuterol* or *antihistamines* but unlike epinephrine, have no direct effect on the mast cells or basophils themselves ^[11].
- Prompt treatment with epinephrine is encouraged as this may slow or halt the progression of severe anaphylaxis.
- Furthermore, most fatalities from food-induced anaphylaxis are associated with delayed administration of epinephrine; yet, there is a persistent and well-established underutilization of epinephrine in the treatment of anaphylaxis.
- When an *epinephrine auto-injector* is prescribed, families should be given training that how and when to administer it. Written anaphylaxis action plans are encouraged, listing medications and their doses, and detailing emergency follow-up procedures including activation of emergency medical services (EMS).

Homeopathic Medicines for Food Allergy

The Homeopathy system of medicine is based on the principle “*Similia Similibus Curentur*”. Homeopathy is one of the most popular holistic systems of medicine and the selection of remedy is based on the theory of individualisation and symptom similarity. Homeopathy goals are to build up specific immunity and general immunity against known allergens ^[12]. The goal is not only to treat food allergy symptoms but also to dress its underlying cause and individual susceptibility.

The medications have diverse powers when talks about original ailment conditions. For instance, if a patient complains of eating beans and peas, the specific symptoms will determine the medications that need to be prescribed as well as their dosage and frequency.

Though it is mentioned *urticaria* from eating pork is relieved by *Pulsatilla*, in practice, it applies to fatty food in general ^[13]. Similarly aggravation to *milk* is well tolerated by taking either *Silicea* or *Natrum Carb* ^[14] according to the symptom similarity. Once the *oysters* cause symptoms, the homeopathic doctor generally recommends *Carbo. veg./ Lycopodium* ^[15]. Puls gives good result to fruits and meat allergen.

Table 1 indicates the conditions produced because of allergies to definite food substances and the useful homeopathic drugs.

Table 1: Food allergies complaints and their remedies[#]

| Symptoms | Food Substances | Homeopathic remedies |
|------------------|-----------------|--|
| Urticaria | Meat | Antimony crudum |
| | Shell-fish | Apis mell, Camph, Ter. oleum, Urt-u. |
| | Fruits | Puls. |
| | Pork | Puls. |
| | Strawberries | Bry, Frag. vesca |
| Itching | Fish | Arsenic album |
| | Meat | Rum. crisp, Ruta grave. |
| Diarrhoea | Meat | Cal.carb, Caust, Fer. met., Lept.virg., Nat. Mur, Sepia |
| | Fat food | Antim.crud., Cal. Fluor., Carbo.veg., Cyclamen eur., Kali-chlor, Mag sulph, Puls., Thuja |
| Headache | Fat food | Antim. crud., Carb.veg. Colch., Cyclamen eur., Ipecac., Nat.Carb, Nat. Mur, Nux Mos., Puls., Sang. Cand., Sepia, Thuja |
| | Fat food | Caust., Kali mur, Nat-Phos, Ptelea trif., Puls., Sepia, Sulph |
| Stomach Disorder | Fat food | Caust., Kali mur, Nat-Phos, Ptelea trif., Puls., Sepia, Sulph |
| Cough | Fat food | Ipecac, Mag mur, Puls. |

[#]Recommend from *Repertorium Homeopathicum Syntheticum* [edition 9.1] by Frederik Schroyens; All remedies are just symptomatic; every prescription must be followed with an individual approach.

Table 2 indicates the homeopathic treatments for certain food allergies, as discovered via research on homeopathic literature.

Table 2: Food substances aggravation and their homeopathic remedies*

| Sr. No. | Food Substances | Important Remedies |
|---------|-----------------|---|
| 1. | Ale beer | Gamb, Spong. t., Sulph |
| 2. | Beans & peas | Bry alb., Cal.carb, Colocynth., Lyco clav, Petroleum |
| 3. | Bread | Ars.alb, Antim.crud., Baryta carb, Bry alb, Caust., Colocynth, Fer. met., Hydras- can, Lach. Lecithinum, Lyco clav, Merc-c., Nat. Mur, Nit.ac., Nux Vom., Puls., Rhus Tox, Sarsa. offi, Sepia, Sulph, Verat. alb, Zinc. met |
| 4. | Butter | Ars.alb, Carb.veg, Cyclamen, Fer. met., Phos, Ptelea trif., Puls., Sepia, Tarax. off., Tarentula hisp. |
| 5. | Cabbage | Argent. met, Argent. nit, Argent. phos, Ars.alb, Bry alba, China offi., Lyco clav, Mag. carb., Nat. Sulph., Petroleum, Puls. |
| 6. | Carrots | Lyco clav |
| 7. | Chocolate | Ammon. brom, Borax veneta, Brom., Lithium carb., Lyco clav, Nat. brom., Puls., Raph. sat |
| 8. | Cucumber | Allium cepa, Argent met, Argent. nit, Argent. phos., Nat. Mur, Ignat., Rhus Tox |
| 9. | Eggs | Cal.carb, Chinin arsenic, Cocculus ind., Fer. met., Ferrum sulph., Puls., Sulph |
| 10. | Fish | Fluoric. ac., Kali Sulph., Medussa, Plumbum met., Puls., Sepia |
| 11. | Fruit | Aloe socot., Antim.crud., Ars.alb, Borax veneta, Bry alba, Calc phos., Carb.veg, Caust., Chin. Off., Chinin arsenic., Cistus Can., Colocynth, Croton tig., Ferrum met., Ipecac., Iris versi., Lyco clav, Mag mur., Natrum Ars., Nat.Carb, |

| | | |
|-----|------------|--|
| | | Nat. Sulph., Oleand., Phos. ac., Podo., Psorinum, Puls., Rhododendron chrysanth.Rum.crisp., Selen., Sepia suc., Verat. alb |
| 12 | Garlic | Phosp. |
| 13 | Meat | Bry alba, Cal.carb, Chin. Off., Colch., Fer. met., Kali-bich., Kali-carb, Lecithinum, Lyssin, Ptelea trif., Puls., Rumex |
| 14. | Oil | Cantharis vesic., Carbo-veg., Chin. Off., Cyclamen eur., Fer. met., Graph., Menyanthes trif., Nat. Mur, Puls. |
| 15. | Onions | Bry alba, Ignat., Lyco clav, Puls., Sulph, Thuja |
| 16 | Oranges | Oleand. |
| 17 | Oysters | Aloe socot., Brom., Colocyn., Lyco clav, Podo., Puls., Sulph. acid. |
| 18 | Pastry | Antim.crud., Bry alba, Cal.carb, Kali-carb, Kali-chlor, Lyco clav, Phosp., Puls., Verat. alb |
| 19. | Pears | Verat. alb |
| 20. | Plums | Ars.alb, Mercurius corrosivus |
| 21. | Pork | Antim.crud., Carbo-veg., Colch., Cyclamen eur., Graph., Ipecac., Nat-Arsenic, Nat.Carb, Nat. Mur, Puls., Sepia |
| 22. | Potatoes | Alumina, Aluminium met., Alumen, Bry alb, Colocyn., Nat-Sulph, Puls., Sepia suc, Silic.Sulph, Verat. alb. |
| 23. | Rice | Ignat., |
| 24. | Salads | Cal.carb, Puls. |
| 25. | Sardines | Lyco clav |
| 26. | Sauerkraut | Bry alba, Cal.carb, China offi., Lyco clav, Petroleum, Phosp., Puls. |
| 27 | Shell-fish | Colocyn., Lyco clav, Urtica urens |
| 28 | Sugar | Argent-nit., Cal.carb, Merc. sol, Selen., Sulph |
| 29 | Sweets | Antim.crud., Argent-nit., Chamo., Graph., Ignat., Ipecac., Lyco clav, Merc. sol, Monilia albicans, Nat-Phos, Puls., Selen., Sulph |
| 30. | Turnips | Bry alba, Lyco clav, Puls. |
| 31. | Vinegar | Aconitum napellus, Antim.crud., Ars.alb, Belladonna, Carbo-veg., Fer. met., Graph., Nat-Phos, Puls., Sepia succus, Sulph |
| 32. | Whiskey | Antim.crud., Arnica Mont, Ars.alb, Cal.carb, Hepar sulph, Lach., Led. pal, Nux Vom., Ranun. bulb, Rhus Tox, Stram. |
| 33 | Wine | Alumina, Antim.crud., Arnica Mont, Ars.alb, Borax veneta, Cal.carb, Chin. Off., Coffea cruda, Conium mac., Flouric ac., Gelsemium semp, Glonoine, Lach., Led. pal, Lyco clav, Mercurius sol, Naja tripudians, Natrum arsenic., Nat.Carb, Nat. Mur, Nux Mos., Nux Vom., Opium, Phos. ac., Ranun. bulb, Rhododendron chry., Sabadilla offi., Selen., Silic.Sulph, Zinc. met., Zinc Phos. |

* Recommend from *Repertorium Homeopathicum Syntheticum* [edition 9.1] by *Frederik Schroyens*; All remedies are just symptomatic; every prescription must be followed with an individual approach.

Conclusion

In practically every nation, food allergies are becoming a bigger health concern. Homeopathic medicines have the ability to relieve the distress of the patient whatsoever be the disease. Homeopathy is the specialised system of medicine which treats the patient as a whole and not only the disease. Homeopathic treatment in food allergies become very effective and safe. It lessens allergic symptoms and enhances general health. We hope that these steps for primary care providers will provide a more straightforward approach:

1. Clinical history and physical examination
2. Diagnostic testing
3. Homeopathic medication
4. Counselling/education for patients and families.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

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Not available

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