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## Exploring The Scope of Homoeopathy In Food Allergy: An Holistic Overview

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### ABSTRACT

Food allergies pose a significant health challenge affecting millions gradually, necessitating comprehensive approaches for effective management. Abnormal immune reactions to proteins found in food characterise food allergies. It mainly affects the children. It is a crucial public health problem in the sophisticated world and has a significant impact on the lives of allergic people and their families. The allergic people have to avoid food throughout their life.

### Keywords

Food allergy, Homoeopathy, Homoeopathic medicine, immune system

### DEFINITION

Food allergy refers to an abnormal immunologic response to food that occurs in a susceptible host.[1]

### EPIDEMIOLOGY

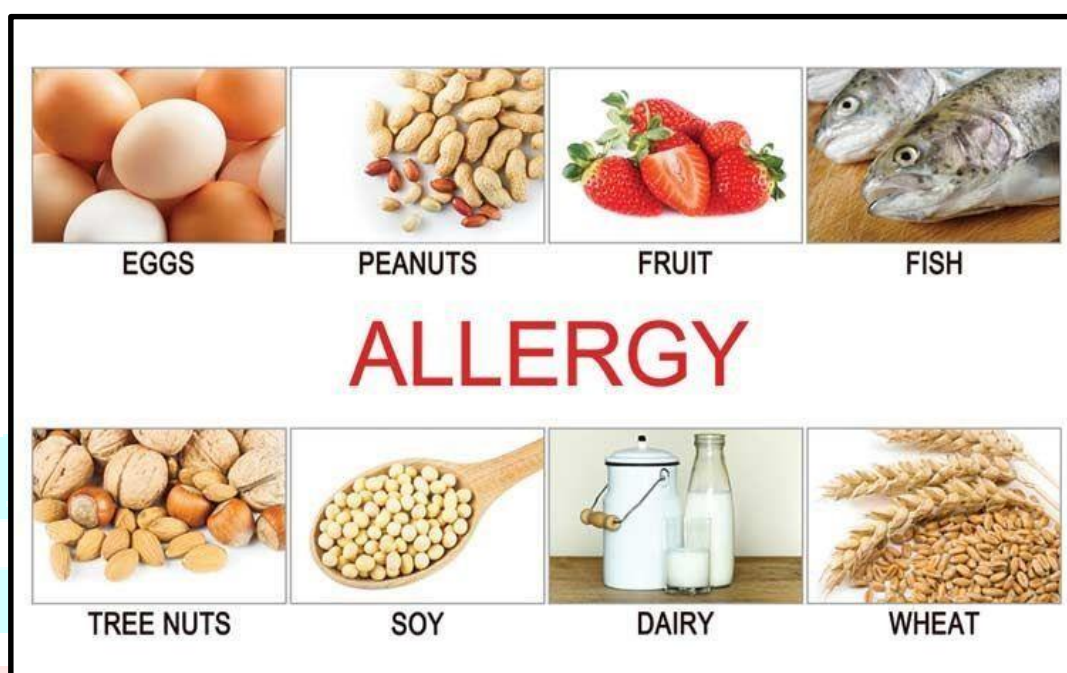
The prevalence of food allergy is high in infants and toddlers. Cow's milk allergy is experienced by 2.5% of infants and up to 8% of children less than three years of age. The prevalence of food allergy decreases slightly with age, affecting almost 4% of the general population [1]. As far as 20% of the population consider themselves as suffering from food allergy but only 1-2% of adults and 5-7% of children have genuine food allergies.[2]

## AETIOLOGY

The variation in clinical manifestations of food allergy are due to different immune mechanisms, response of target organs and nature of triggering protein.

These variations lead to classification of food allergies into three types:

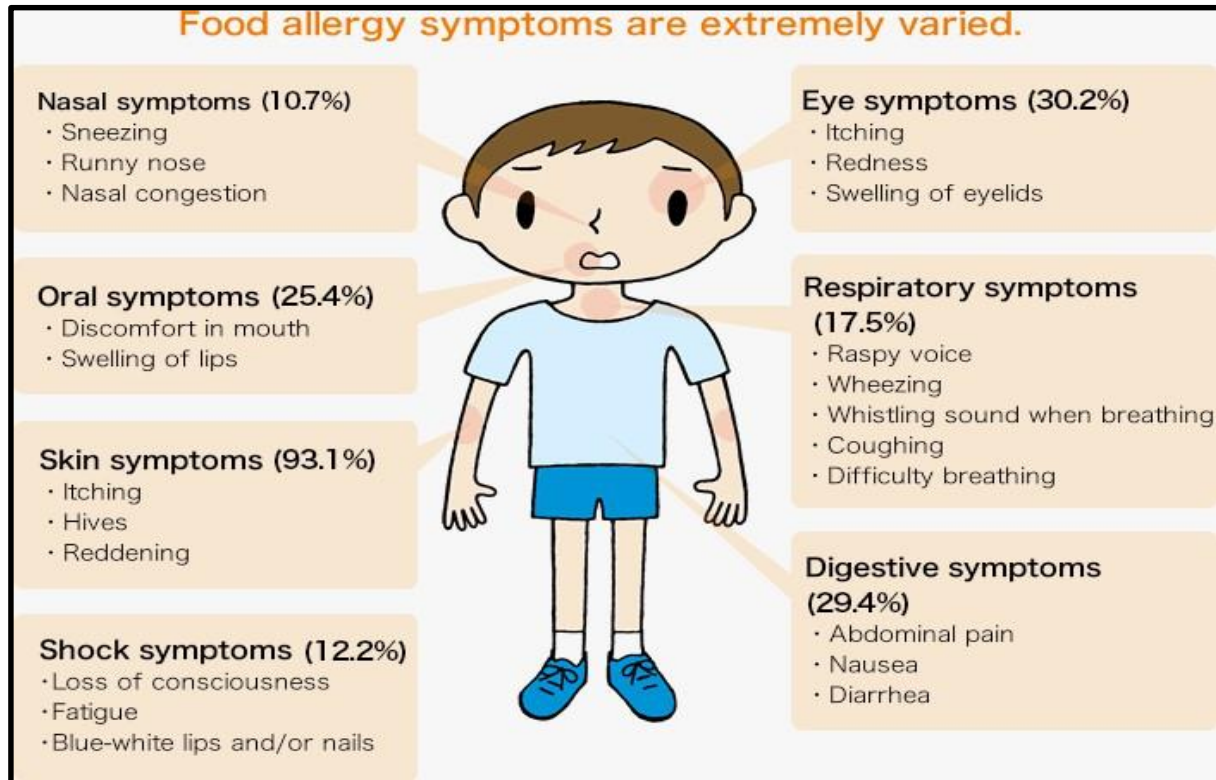
1. IgE antibody dependent diseases (caused by multiple foods, raw fruits and vegetables)  
Cell-mediated disorders without detectable antibodies (caused by eggs, milk, wheat and soya)
2. Disorders with IgE and non-IgE mechanisms (caused by wheat, lactose, fructose and some food additives)



The development of food allergies begins in early childhood with initial eczema, followed by subsequent sequential development of food allergy, allergic rhinitis and asthma the so called atopic march. Allergic diseases are also an example of gene environment interactions.[1] The most common allergy producing food substances are peanuts, milk, eggs, soya and shellfish.[2]

## CLINICAL FEATURES

Symptoms usually develop within a few minutes to one hour after eating offending food. They range from mild discomfort to severe life threatening reactions. The symptoms last for days or weeks. The development of symptoms and severity of reaction depends upon the amount of food consumed and the sensitivity of the individual.



## DIAGNOSIS

1. Clinical history
2. Complete physical examination

## DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

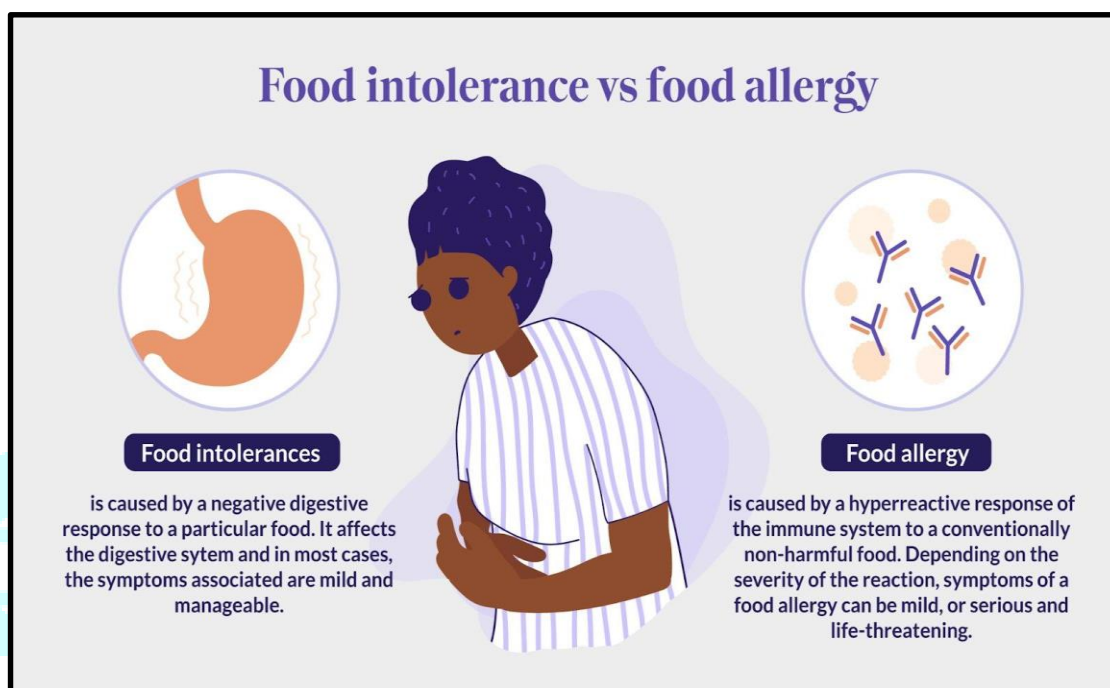
1. Food intolerance.
2. Infections (bacterial, viral and parasitic)
3. Coeliac disease
4. Inflammatory bowel disease
5. Bowel ischemia
6. Gallbladder disease
7. Pancreatic insufficiency
8. Gastrointestinal neoplasms

## MANAGEMENT

1. Strictly eliminate the causative food allergen from the diet.
2. Avoid any contact with the food either directly through skin contact or indirectly ingestion or inhalation.
3. Periodic reintroduction of food allergens under physician supervision is warranted to determine whether clinical tolerance has developed or not.
4. Clinical intolerance develops to most food over time, except for peanuts, nuts and shellfish.

5. There is a relationship between the decrease in serum food specific IgE concentrations and the likelihood of developing intolerance.
6. A greater decrease in serum food specific IgE levels over a short period of time might be indicative of greater likelihood of developing intolerance.

## FOOD ALLERGY VS FOOD INTOLERANCE



| Food Allergy   | Food Intolerance   |
|--|--|
| Immune response to proteins present in food.   | Digestive issue caused by lack of digestive enzymes available to breakdown proteins present in food.                           |
| The body MISTAKES certain types of proteins in food as invaders like bacteria, virus, parasite it must battle and get rid of it. | The body makes efforts to digest the food, but has difficulty in doing so.   |
| Even a small amount of food can cause the reaction.  | Small amount is insufficient to cause the response as tolerance can be developed against it, large amounts cause the response. |
| Immediate reaction.  | Delayed reaction.  |
| Symptoms include itching, rashes, swelling of lips and throat, anaphylaxis and even death.                                       | Symptoms include gastrointestinal issues like diarrhea, indigestion, nausea, cramps. Migraine, eczema.                         |
| Life threatening.  | Non-life threatening.  |

**ALLERGY VS IDIOSYNCRASY**

|  | Idiosyncrasy  | Allergy  |
|--|---|--|
| Definition                             | It is a peculiar corporeal constitution which, although otherwise healthy, possess a disposition to be brought into a more or less morbid state by certain things which seems to produce no change in many other individuals. | It is a state of hypersensitivity of the body to a specific substance (allergen, antigen) characterised by an antigen or allergen.                                     |
| Inherited or acquired                  | May be inherited or acquired  | Acquired   |
| Affections of mental or physical plane | It affects both mental and physical spheres simultaneously  | It affects the entire physical plane but the mental sphere probably may remain unaffected.   |
| Relation with intake of protein        | It has no relation with intake of protein.  | It has a definite relation with intake of protein  |
| Number of patients                     | Very rare.  | Found in a large number of people.   |
| Curable or not                         | Idiosyncrasy patients are very difficult, even impossible to cure   | Allergic patients can often be cured with homoeopathic medicines, easily and rapidly with the exception of some complicated cases or cases arising out of suppression. |
| As provers                             | Idiosyncratic provers may produce a full picture of drug action without repetition.   | But it is not possible in the case of an allergic patient.   |

**Unveiling Allergy Dynamics through the Lens of the Organon of Medicine: Deciphering Aphorism §117's Insights on Homoeopathic Principles**

Dr. Hahnemann mentioned Idiosyncrasies, as peculiar corporeal constitutions which, although otherwise healthy, possess a disposition to be brought into more or less morbid state by certain things which seems to produce no impression and no change in many other individuals. Master sites few examples such as few people will have the tendency to faint from the smell of roses and other morbid, dangerous states from partaking of mussels, crabs or the rie of the barbel, from touching the leaves of some kinds of sumach, etc.[3]



The study of idiosyncrasy is closely related to homoeopathy. The usual explanation of the term is an over-sensitiveness to one thing or a few things. It does not apply to the general susceptibility in feeble constitution where patients are susceptible to all things, over-susceptible and over-impressed by simple annoyances.[4]

The Homoeopathic recognises a wide range in susceptibility. The idiosyncrasy resulting from chronic miasm is chronic idiosyncrasy and acute miasm is called acute idiosyncrasy.

Dr. J.T.Kent mentions few idiosyncratic patients who cannot bear the smell of flowers in the room because of becoming sick, some will get sick from smell of roses.[4]

The idiosyncrasy which develops after birth is called acquired idiosyncrasy and which is present from birth. The latter one is very stubborn and will sometimes persist, in spite of our best endeavours, to the end of life. Antipsoric treatment is necessary for treating the latter one as an antipsoric will act at a deeper plane i.e., it acts at the plane of dynamics (disease cure) not at the nutritive plane (disease cause).[4]

## **HOMOEOPATHIC MANAGEMENT**

### **Arsenicum album**

The arsenic patient will have ailments from alcoholism, ptomaine poisoning, stings, dissecting wounds, chewing tobacco. Bad effects from decayed food, vegetable diet, melons and watery fruits. The odor of discharges is putrid. There is an annual return of complaints. The patient develops dyspepsia after consuming vinegar, acids, ice creams and ice-water. Along with pain in the abdomen there is terrible fear, dyspnoea, faintness, icy coldness of body and great exhaustion. There is a sensation that everything which is taken through the mouth is lodged in the oesophagus, which seems as if closed and nothing would pass. Throat becomes swollen, oedematous constricted, burning. There is difficulty in swallowing. The face of an arsenic patient is swollen, pale, yellow, cachectic, sunken, cold and covered with sweat. Arsenic patients have fear of death and of being left alone. He thinks that it is useless to take medicines. Great anguish, restlessness and prostration are marked.[5]

### **Carbo vegetabilis**

This medicine is indicated to a person who has the tendency to react to food substances with weakness, faintness, chilliness and indigestion. There is frequent need for eructations as they have bloating sensation and flatulence. There is difficulty in breathing. Even when feeling very cold this person has a craving for fresh air. There is an insecure feeling because of weakness. Worse from talking, evening, eating. Face is pale, Hippocratic and covered with cold sweat.[5]

### **Colchicum autumnale**

This remedy is indicated for gastrointestinal ailments arising after eating eggs. There is distension of the abdomen with gas. The patient passes flatus with a loud sound and frequent tasteless eructations with cramps in abdomen. The patient cannot bear the smell of food and it causes nausea and vomiting. Stool contains white large particles with mucus-like rice water. Symptoms get relief from bending forwards.[5]

### **Flouricum acidum**

This remedy is indicated to people who develop pain in the abdomen and sour eructations after eating fish, vinegar and plum.[6] Before meals there is sensation of heaviness in the abdomen. Warm drinks produce diarrhoea. The patient has an aversion to coffee. Symptoms are relieved by tight clothes.

### **Lycopodium clavatum**

It is a remedy for the ill effects of shellfish and pain in the abdomen after wine.[6] The patient develops dyspepsia after consuming fermentable food, cabbage and beans. There is excessive hunger. Desire for sweets. Aversion to bread. There is a sensation of fullness after eating a small amount of food and a constant sense of fermentation in the abdomen. The patient prefers hot food and drinks. Eructations are incomplete, burning rises only to the pharynx and they burn for hours.

### **Natrium carbonicum**

This remedy is indicated to people who have trouble in digesting and assimilating many foods and have to stick to a restricted diet plan. They have the tendency to develop heartburn, indigestion and ulcers from eating food.

Milk or dairy products causes diarrhoea and an empty feeling in the stomach. The patient will have a craving for potatoes, sweets and milk but it will make them sick, so they have to avoid it. They always feel weak and want to be alone to rest.[5]

### **Rheum palmatum**

This remedy is indicated in persons who have a desire for various kinds of food, but soon tires of all. There is throbbing in the pit of the abdomen. The abdomen feels full and the wind seems to rise up to the chest. Colicky pain about navel. Colic when uncovering.[5]

### **Urtica urens**

This remedy is indicated for people who develop violent itching with burning and stinging pain all over the skin after eating shellfish. The skin becomes red, elevated and there is constant desire to scratch. The eruptions and itching disappear on lying down and reappear immediately after rising. The complaints get worse by water, touch, air and rising up and get better after lying down.[5]

### **Zingiber Officinale**

This remedy is indicated to the people who suffer from heaviness of the abdomen and scratching sensation in the throat after eating bread, melons and drinking impure water. There is a sensation of stone in the abdomen on awakening with much wind and rumbling. There is great thirst and emptiness.[5]

## Let's explore rubrics related to allergies from Repertory

SKIN - Eruptions, urticaria, wine from[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - acids, after[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - beer, after[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - bread, after[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - eggs[7]  
STOMACH -DISORDERED - fat food, from[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - fruit, after[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - milk, after[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - peaches,after[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - oysters[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - fresh meat[7]  
STOMACH - DISORDERED - fish[7]  
GENERALS - Allergic constitution - food allergy[8]  
GENERALS - Allergic constitution - atopic[8]  
STOMACH - vomiting allergy; from food[8]  
SKIN - ERUPTIONS - urticaria - food; from[8]  
GENERALS - CONVULSIONS - errors in diet [8]  
GENERALS- FOOD and DRINKS -diet - agg. - errors in diet [8]  
GENERALS - FOOD and DRINKS - milk agg [8]  
GENERALS - FOOD and DRINKS - shellfish agg. [8]  
GENERALS - FOOD and DRINKS - sugar agg. [8]

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this holistic overview of scope of homoeopathy in managing food allergies underscores its potential as a valuable complementary approach. While integrating physiological and psychological considerations, this exploration paves the way for more personalised and nuanced strategies in healthcare, offering hope for improved quality of life for those affected by food allergies.

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