

Many asthmatics do well on food-allergy tests, study finds

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Less likely to have a bad reaction during an oral food-allergy test.

(HealthDay) -- People with asthma fare better on a type of food-allergy test called a "food challenge" than non-asthmatics, new research suggests.

Food challenges involve people suspected of having a food allergy eating small amounts of the food orally to see if they have an allergic [reaction](#). If there is no reaction, the person eats increasing amounts of the food to determine if they can safely eat it.

In the study, researchers from the Medical College of Wisconsin and the Children's Hospital of Wisconsin reviewed the charts of 105 [patients](#) with food allergies who ranged in age from 9 months to 74 years old. About three-quarters of the patients had [asthma](#).

About 21 percent of those who didn't have asthma failed [food challenges](#)

, meaning they had a reaction such as hives, cough or wheezing after being exposed to the food. Less than 13 percent of the asthmatic patients failed the food challenge.

"A diagnosis of asthma was not associated with a higher food-challenge failure rate, which suggests that food challenges should be encouraged in this population," senior study author Dr. Monica Vasudev said in a news release from the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI).

The study was scheduled to be presented March 4 at the AAAAI annual meeting in Orlando, Fla. Data and conclusions should be viewed as preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

The study authors noted that doctors and patients may be worried that having asthma means having an elevated risk of allergic reactions.

"We wanted to review the results of food challenges because the tendency may be to avoid them due to concern of a reaction, and this is especially true in patients with a history of asthma," study first author Carrie Lee noted in the release.

Food challenges, she added, "should always be performed under supervised medical care with use of an established protocol."

More information: The [Food Allergy Initiative](#) has more on food allergies.

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