

# Non-celiac wheat sensitivity may be an allergy

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(HealthDay)—Non-celiac wheat sensitivity (NCWS) may be a non-immunoglobulin E-mediated food allergy, according to a review published online Nov. 5 in the *American Journal of Gastroenterology*.

Antonio Carroccio, M.D., from the University of Palermo in Italy, and colleagues reviewed both the literature and data collected from 276 patients diagnosed with NCWS during a double-blind placebo-controlled [wheat](#) challenge. The role of serum immunoglobulin G antibodies and the basophil activation assay in food allergy, as well as histology findings in the food allergy diagnosis, were reviewed.

When comparing patients with [irritable bowel syndrome](#) (IBS) not due to NCWS and [patients](#) suffering from NCWS and IBS, the researchers found that NCWS was significantly associated with a personal history of [food allergy](#) in the pediatric age ( $P = 0.01$ ), coexistent atopic diseases ( $P$

= 0.0001), positive serum anti-gliadin ( $P = 0.0001$ ) and anti-betalactoglobulin ( $P = 0.001$ ) antibodies, positive cytofluorimetric assay revealing in-vitro basophil activation by food antigens ( $P = 0.0001$ ), and a presence of eosinophils in the intestinal mucosa biopsies ( $P = 0.0001$ ).

"NCWS can now be considered the cause of gastrointestinal symptoms, which overlap those commonly attributed to functional disorders," Carroccio said in a statement. "However, many doubts remain and it must be underlined that we must utilize the double-blind placebo-controlled challenge method to confirm the suspicion of NCWS and then study the pathogenesis of that specific clinical manifestation. A confident NCWS diagnosis must exclude a placebo effect."

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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