

Immunological cross-reactions may increase food allergies

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(HealthDay)—Food allergy can be caused by immunological cross-reactions to common inhalant allergens, with diverse patterns of allergic reactions to foods observed, according to a position paper published in the September issue of *Allergy*.

Thomas Werfel, M.D., Ph.D., from Hannover Medical University in Germany, and colleagues discuss new food allergies that are caused by cross-reacting allergenic structures shared by inhalants and foods and seen in older children, adolescents, and adults.

The researchers note that immunoglobulin E (IgE) stimulated by a cross-reactive inhalant allergen can result in [allergic reactions](#) to different

foods. After the first consumption of a food containing a cross-reactive allergen, local, mild, or severe systemic reactions may occur. In clinical practice, skin prick testing or determination of specific IgE in vitro can be used to elucidate clinically relevant sensitizations. To reach a diagnosis, component-resolved diagnosis may help, and could predict the risk of a systemic reaction. In cases of unclear history, [allergy](#) needs to be confirmed by oral challenge tests. In pollen-related [food allergy](#), the therapeutic potential of allergen immunotherapy with inhalant allergens is unclear, with a need for more placebo-controlled studies.

"As we are facing an increasing incidence of pollen allergies, a shift in sensitization patterns and changes in nutritional habits, and the occurrence of new, so far unknown allergies due to cross-reactions are expected," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the medical device industry.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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