

Food allergies take a greater emotional toll on Asian families

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Studies have shown that food allergies negatively affect the quality of life of those who suffer with them. A new study being presented at this year's virtual American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) Annual Scientific Meeting reveals the impact on food allergy quality of life (FAQOL) for Asian patients and their parents is significantly higher than for other races.

"Based on our questionnaire, Asian parents of children with food allergy living in the U.S. had a mean score of 50.5, indicating a 'fairly' negative impact on quality of life, which was significantly higher than white and Black parents," says Christine Rubeiz, MD, ACAAI member and lead author of the study. "White and Black parents had mean scores of 40.4 and 40.9 respectively, corresponding closer to the food allergy having 'a little bit' of a [negative impact](#) on quality of life."

The study examined 6829 questionnaires filled out at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center as part of a retrospective chart review. The questionnaires were scored from 0-100, with higher scores corresponding to worse quality of life.

"Our study showed Asian parents had significantly higher scores (worse QOL) in both higher and lower socioeconomic groups," says allergist Amal Assa'ad, MD, ACAAI member and senior author of the study. "Most studies of Asian children have been done in Asia, where the prevalence of food allergy is 3-8%. Some estimates of food allergy in the general U.S. population report a similar prevalence, about 8%. Asian

families with food allergy appear to have worse food allergy-related-quality of life compared to other races, according to our research. This highlights the need for further studies on the impact of food allergy on Asian families, who may be an underrecognized population."

According to Dr. Rubeiz, "We found other significant racial disparities in FAQOL scores, particularly with Black and Hispanic patients. Within the Medicaid population, we found that Black and Hispanic patients and parents had significantly higher scores (worse [quality of life](#)) compared to white patients and [parents](#). Cultural food preferences and the financial burden of [food allergy](#) may be a factor in this finding."

More information: Presentation Title: Race/Ethnicity and Socioeconomic Status Effect on Food Allergy-Related Quality of Life in Children and Caregivers
Presenter: Christine Rubeiz, MD

Provided by American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology

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