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Screening for food specific IgE antibodies among Saudi patients with clinical suspicion of food allergy

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Background & Aim: The prevalence of food allergy is increasing all over the world and varies in different geographical locations. This study was performed to assess allergic sensitization against various food materials among Saudi patients clinically presenting with food allergy.

Patients & Methods: Data for the presence of food specific IgE antibodies were collected retrospectively from 280 Saudi patients screened between October 2012 and February 2014. These patients presented in the allergy clinic at King Khalid University Hospital, Riyadh with clinical signs and symptoms of food allergy. Out of the total 92 patients were found to have food specific circulating antibodies. This group of patients comprised of 67 (72.8%) males and 25 (27.2%) females with 78 (84.8%) children of <12 years and 14 (15.2%) adults (mean age 9.04 ± 7.71 years). Food specific IgE antibodies were quantified by Radioallergosorbent test (RAST) using Pharmacia ImmunoCAP 250 analyzer.

Results: The most frequently sensitizing food allergens were milk in 57 (61.96%) patients followed by, egg white in 55 (59.78%) patients, wheat in 42 (45.65%) patients and peanut in 35 (38.04%) patients. Male children were consistently more sensitized against egg white (47.4% vs. 15.3; $p \leq 0.0002$), egg yolk (33.3 vs. 7.6; $p \leq 0.0002$), milk (47.4 vs. 22.1; $p \leq 0.001$), wheat (37.5 vs. 12.4; $p \leq 0.0006$) and peanut (37.5% vs. 11%; $p \leq 0.0007$) compared to females. Milk sensitization was high among children whereas sensitization due to egg white was high in adults.

Conclusion: Patients were frequently sensitized against milk, egg white, wheat and peanut particularly the male children.

Biography

Rawan Khalid Al Mesned is currently a Medical student from King Saud University, College of Medicine in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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