

ALLERGIC REACTIONS

ALLERGIC AND ASTHMATIC REACTIONS TO FOOD ADDITIVES

The list of additives used in the food industry is extensive and includes thousands of flavorings and coloring substances, preservatives, sweeteners, antioxidants, and thickeners, etc. However, only a small number of additives have been implicated in IgE-mediated or other (immunological or non-immunological) adverse reactions. Some studies concluded that sensitivity to the following food additives in patients with chronic urticaria/angioedema is rare, but can occur:

- MSG
- BENZOATES
- PARABENS
- SULFITES
- BHA
- BHT
- TARTRAZINE (FD&C YELLOW #5, E102)
- SUNSET YELLOW (FD&C YELLOW #6, E110)

In asthmatics and allergic patients the risk of reaction is greater. While any asthmatic may develop sulfite sensitivity, these sulfite sensitive asthmatics have more severe asthma and are often steroid dependent.

SULFITE-CONTAINING FOODS:

HIGH CONTENT

- Dried fruit (excluding dark raisins and prunes), Lemon juice (nonfrozen), Lime juice (nonfrozen)
- Wine, Molasses, Sauerkraut juice, Grape juice (white, white sparkling, pink sparkling, red sparkling)
- Dried potatoes, Wine vinegar, Fruit topping, Shrimp (fresh), Pickled peppers, Pickled cocktail onions

MODERATE CONTENT

- Corn starch, Frozen potatoes, Maple syrup, Fresh mushrooms, Malt vinegar, Dried cod, Beer, Gelatin
- Dry soup mix, Maraschino cherries, Pectin, Pickles/relishes, Imported jams and jellies
- Gravies, Sauces, Soft drinks, Instant tea, Pizza dough (frozen), Pie dough
- Coconut, Fresh fruit salad, High fructose corn syrup, Canned potatoes, Hominy

Hyperactivity and behavioral changes in children are sometimes seen from food additive and a trial of avoidance and rechallenge is often useful. Migraine patients may react to Tyramine containing foods which is not an additive but an Amino Acid that can affect their headaches.

