

MEETING ABSTRACT

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Prevalence of food allergy in preschool children

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Background

The objective of this study was to know the prevalence of food allergy in preschool children enrolled in municipal daycare centers from Uberlândia, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Methods

This is an observational study that enrolled children from 24 to 59 months in municipal daycare centers from Uberlândia. A self-administered questionnaire that was used to evaluate the prevalence of food allergy related by parents; subsequently, children with a suspecting food allergy were invited to a clinical and laboratory evaluation, in order to know the real prevalence of food allergy.

Results

13,841 children enrolled, 8,031 parents responded the questionnaire. The prevalence of food allergy reported by parents was 17.6% and the main foods mentioned were cow milk, pork, fruit, chocolate and chicken egg, and associated symptoms were red spots (54.2%), vomit (39.6%), diarrhea (32.1%), abdominal pain (31.4%), mouth and eyes edema (17.5%) and nose secretion (10.6%). After clinical and lab evaluation, the prevalence of food allergy found was 0.59% of preschool children, which 0.35% was IgE-mediated and 0.24% was non-IgE mediated reactions. The egg was the main food allergen, reaching 0.34% of preschool children, followed by cow milk (0.21%), wheat and pork meat (0.06%), corn, mustard, honey and fish (0.03%). The main symptoms were red spots and itching (52.6%), diarrhea (42%), eyes edema and abdominal pain (36.8%).

Conclusions

The prevalence of food allergy in preschool children found was inferior than described previously. There is a

great difference in the parental perception and the real prevalence of food allergy. Several patients were undergoing an inadequate diet exclusion, that results in a reduction of quality of life and could impact in the nutritional status.

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