

**O 61. ESTIMATION OF FOOD ALLERGIES THROUGH THE EIA TEST**

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**ABSTRACT:** For more than 50 years, many children with food protein allergies and other forms of dietary protein intolerance have been treated successfully with protein hydrolysates with highly reduced allergenicity and, more recently, also with products based on amino acid mixtures. In this article, we summarize the general state of knowledge about the healthy immune response to antigens in the diet as well as the basis of immune deviation that results in IgE sensitization and allergic reactivity to foods. The increasing prevalence of food allergies cannot be explained by genetic factors. Thus, external factors such as environmental factors are considered to play a role in the development of food allergies. The interface between the external environment and the immune system is formed by the intestinal epithelium. Emerging data suggest that the interaction between intestinal epithelial cells and mucosal dendritic cells is of particular importance and determines the outcome of immune responses to dietary antigens. Nine hundred Albanian children from the age of 6 to 11 years old from two different elementary schools in Tirana served as a representative sample group in our study. They were first requested to fill in a questionnaire reporting all food allergies they had experienced. Afterwards, all children were examined for blood levels of immunoglobulin E (IgE) using the Enzyme Immunoassay (EIA) kits.

*Keywords: immune response; food allergy; immunoglobulin; antigen*