Adherence and safety in home doses in oral specific tolerance induction

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Aims: Egg and milk allergy is the main food allergy in the paediatric population in our country. In recent years, as an alternative to egg and milk avoidance a novel and promising treatment has appeared consisting in induction of oral tolerance. Allergenic food doses are increased progressively from a minimum amount of egg/milk. Doses are increased in the hospital and the same dose is maintained at home. The procedure is not free of risk even when doses are taken at home. We aim to evaluate the adherence to desensitized food doses and patient safety at home.

Methods: One-hundred and twenty patients treated by specific oral tolerance induction (SOTI) to milk or egg from two hospitals were invited to fill an anonymous survey via web. Similar recommendations were given to the patients under SOTI in these two hospitals and full-time access to an allergist was available by e-mail or telephone. Survey asked about adherence to treatment, cofactors avoidance and confidence about treating reactions at home.

Results: 109 patients answered the survey. 70% of the patients never forgot to take the dose. Whereas 82% never forgot to take premedication (antihistamines), 40% forgot to take asthma medication. Most of the patients always avoided cofactors (89% avoided fasting, 90% NSAIDs, 78% exercise) and 88% of the patients were correctly monitored after taking the doses always. However, regarding reactions at home, at least in one reaction, 53% of the patients did not know if the reaction suffered should be treated and 26% did not know the type of medication required for that reaction.

Discussion: Most of the patients showed good adherence to the treatment and correct cofactors avoidance however, patients do not feel confident when a reaction occurs.

Conclusion: Patients need to be taught in managing reactions before starting a food SOTI.