

Correspondence

Drugs may also induce allergic reactions in sensitized individuals through passionate kissing

To the Editor:

We greatly appreciated the article of Maloney et al¹ on peanut allergen exposure through saliva during passionate kissing or through sharing different utensils. The transport of allergenic materials and consequent exposure by contact with oral mucosa may be more common than expected. Maloney et al¹ found high levels of Ara h 1 in saliva only 5 minutes after the ingestion of 2 tablespoons of commercially prepared peanut butter (PB) on a sandwich. Because the collection of saliva was carried out only twice (at 5 minutes and 60 minutes) after PB ingestion, we believe that the amounts of Ara h 1 secreted in saliva might be significantly different if collected at 5 minutes or 60 minutes. The suggested methods (rubbing the tongue over the teeth and along the gums and palate) to remove residual PB and the sandwich particles from the mouth might not be effective if applied without the use of water. Consequently, it is likely that the amounts of Ara h 1 detected in saliva after 5 minutes might contain higher percentages of allergen originating from the oral cavity than those collected at 60 minutes. In our opinion, more aggressive removal of food residues from the oral cavity by using water before the first salivary collection and the use of multiple (4/5) collections within the first 60 minutes would have been a better approach to define the kinetics of Ara h 1 in the saliva during this crucial period of time without the risk of contamination.

We would also like to point out that kissing may lead to allergic reactions to far more than food. We and others have recently published 3 reports of oral allergy syndrome and generalized urticaria in 3 drug-sensitized individuals a few minutes after receiving passionate kisses from their partners who had previously used the drug.²⁻⁴ In each case, penicillin-derived antibiotics (bacampicillin and amoxicillin) were involved. In the first case, a patient's husband was taking 1200 mg bacampicillin twice daily and had ingested a bacampicillin tablet about 2 hours before,² so that the drug had reached an adequate concentration in the oral mucosa and in salivary secretions.⁵ Similar

pharmacokinetics and time of onset of symptoms has been demonstrated for amoxicillin, the antibiotic responsible for allergic reaction in the other 2 cases.⁶ In these highly sensitized patients, even the small amount of antibiotic delivered through the kiss was sufficient to elicit the same symptoms as the usual oral administration, even though the symptoms were less severe. Drug allergy induced by kissing is rare, but may be clinically relevant. It is also likely that the prevalence could be underestimated considering the relatively high number of drug-intolerant individuals who are sexually active.

Drug-induced allergy by passionate kissing should have been mentioned in the article about peanut allergy because it demonstrates the role of saliva as a vehicle for transfer of sensitizing agents, as well as the lack of contamination via the mouth. Physicians should be aware that several sensitizing agents can cause these problems.

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