

Anaphylactoid reaction to celery

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A 55-year-old waitress with no history of atopy was investigated for recurrent attacks of urticaria, five attacks during the past year. Two were very severe and resulted in unconsciousness. No infectious foci were discovered, routine blood and urine tests were normal. Oral provocation tests with salicylic acid, benzoic acid and the azo dyes tartrazine, New Coccine and Sunset Yellow produced no reactions.

The patient suspected she had gotten urticaria after eating raw or cooked celery. Therefore she was given 1.3 and 6 g of raw celery at 2-h intervals; 1.5 h after the last dose of celery her hands began to itch and swell; 15 min later generalized urticaria, swelling of the tongue with slurred speech, and chills occurred. Her blood pressure fell to 105/70 (normally 140/80). She recovered rapidly after injection of adrenaline and hydrocortisone and she also received antihistamine. Later a scratch test with a piece of raw celery was applied to her arm. After 1.5-min contact she felt pricking sensations in her thumb and the celery was removed. Examination after 15 min showed an edema of 10 × 10 mm and erythema of 25 × 35 mm. A control with physiological saline (scratch test) was negative. Histamine 1:10000 (scratch test) showed an edema of 3 × 7 mm. Patch test with celery (48 h and 30 min) was negative. Scratch test with celery was per-

formed on three control patients with negative results. The patient was later tested with other spices in the Umbelliferae family: parsley, dill, anise, fennel, caraway, shevрил and coriander. Scratch tests, oral provocations, and patch tests 30 min and 48 h were done with negative results.

Thus the patient had an anaphylactoid reaction after eating celery which was clearly proven by the oral provocation and scratch test with celery.

Anaphylactoid reactions to celery have been described earlier by Rowe & Rowe (1972). Hannuksela & Lahti (1977) found positive celery reactions (18 %) with scratch tests in persons with atopy and birch pollen allergy. Our patient had a negative RAST to birch but positive (4+) to mugwort and daisy, from which she denied any symptoms.

References

- Hannuksela, M. & Lahti, A. (1977) Immediate reactions to fruits and vegetables. *Contact Dermatitis* 3, 79-84.
- Rowe, A. H. & Rowe, A. Jr. (1972) *Food Allergy, its manifestations and control and the elimination diets*. 1st ed. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas.

Contact dermatitis from propylene oxide

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A 26-year-old female analyst working in an electron microscope laboratory had been suffering from hand eczema for 8 months. After operating on rats, she made electron microscope slides by fixation, dehydration, impregnation and embedding of the specimens. After work-

ing with materials which were used for these activities she had a relapse of her eczema. The results of patch testing with ICDRG standard series, plastics and glues, dyes and disinfectants were negative. Patch tests with the materials with which she was in regular contact gave no

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