

AILANTHUS GLANDULOSA POLLEN AS A CAUSE OF HAY FEVER

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SENSITIVITY to the "tree of heaven" is not frequently seen. Urbach (1949) claims to have seen one case only. Blumstein (1943) published reports of two cases.

During this spring four cases were seen in Jerusalem. Since the number of hay fever patients in our department is small, it is possible that the Ailanthus plays a role of some importance in the Jerusalem area, and the pollen should be used for routine testing.

The tree has multiplied very much in the last few decades. In his first report on hay fever in Palestine (1941), Gutmann did not mention the Ailanthus, but in his second report (1950) he states that the tree grows rapidly and has become "very common here in recent years."

The pollen is insect- and wind-borne, and it was found in a pollen survey during the months of April and May in 1953.

CASE REPORTS

Case 1.—A housewife, aged forty-seven, was referred to the skin clinic with the history that she had suffered for four years from hay fever during the blossoming period of a certain tree, which grows very close to her window. When she moved temporarily to another part of Jerusalem the symptoms virtually disappeared, but recurred when she returned to her own flat.

A scratch test with the pollen elicited a 4+ reaction.

Case 2.—A twenty-four-year-old female office worker reported to the clinic because of rhinitis and severe blepharo-conjunctivitis, which coincided with the blossoming period of the "tree of heaven" which grows in abundance in the neighborhood of her home as well as of her office.

Scratch test with the pollen elicited a 4+ reaction.

Case 3.—A thirty-three-year-old house painter suffered four years from hay fever during the blossoming period. Skin tests with grass pollen showed 4+. After the blossoming period (middle of May) he was well until this year, when his symptoms continued after the grass pollination season. Skin tests with Ailanthus pollen showed 4+. He recovered after the end of the Ailanthus season.

Case 4.—A forty-three-year-old nurse has suffered two years from hay fever during the months of May and early June. Testing with Ailanthus pollen caused a constitutional reaction.

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In all the patients, testing with pollen extract of the olive tree (prepared by Dr. Gutmann), which has approximately the same blossoming period, was negative.

SUMMARY

Four cases of *Ailanthus glandulosa* sensitivity are described. The pollen which is insect- and wind-borne is found in the air. More attention should be paid to this tree as a possible cause of hay fever.

REFERENCES

1. Blumstein, G. J.: Sensitivity to *Ailanthus* pollen. *J. Allergy*, 14:329-334, 1943.
2. Gutmann, M. J.: The first report on hay fever in Palestine. *J. Allergy*, 12:182-187, 1941.
3. Gutmann, M. J.: Hay Fever in Palestine. Second report. *Ann. Allergy*, 8:345-349, 1950.
4. Urbach, E., and Gottlieb, P. M.: *Allergy*. p. 526. New York: Grune and Stratton, 1949.

SOUTHWEST ALLERGY FORUM

The seventeenth annual meeting of the Southwest Allergy Forum will be held at Hotel Beaumont, Beaumont, Texas, April 1-3, 1956. The first afternoon's program is in the form of a panel presentation on the changing picture of pollinosis in the Southwest. Monday's sessions will be devoted to a number of papers of general interest dealing with such subjects as corneal ulcers due to allergy, the basic problems of drug allergy, and gamma globulin and its therapeutic value in the asthmatic child. Dr. Jonathan Forman of Columbus, Ohio, will be the luncheon speaker and will address the meeting on "Working Classifications of Allergic Disorders." Panel discussions on "Infection in Respiratory Allergic Disease" and "Pediatric Allergy" occupy the program for Monday afternoon, the sessions being followed by a cocktail party and banquet. Histamine as an adjunct to allergic management, recurrent eczema of the hands of female patients, allergy management of dendritic ulcer, allergic dermatoses, insect allergy, and unusual allergies will be discussed on Tuesday. Such side activities as golf and fishing have been arranged, and there will be a special program for the ladies.