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Title: Corn cereal sensitization in Maldivian children

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Body: Background: Cereals form an important constituent of food. Corn is being increasingly used as an ingredient in a number of food preparations nowadays. It is known to be allergenic. There is to date no data on prevalence of corn allergy in allergic Maldivian children Objective: We aimed to evaluate corn allergy in children presenting with allergy in our clinic Methods: Children with allergic presentation were evaluated demographically. Their total serum IgE and specific IgE to 29 common food and aeroallergens including corn was estimated. Comparison was performed between children with positive corn IgE with those who proved negative to this test. Results: 26/100 children was positive to corn allergen. There were significantly more females afflicted. Weight seemed unaffected by corn allergy. Presence of atopic dermatitis, eye and respiratory allergy did not differ between corn-sensitive and corn-stable children. Total IgE was also significantly raised in corn IgE positive children compared to those not allergic to corn (1893.60± 379.74 vs 248.61±40.25 IU/ml respectively). Food as well as aeroallergen index was higher in corn-allergic children. Wheat, milk, soyabean, coconut, egg white, dust and pollen allergy was commonly associated with corn allergy. Conclusion: Corn allergy is seen in a quarter of allergic children in Maldives. Females suffer more from it and associated wheat allergy is common.