

FOOD INTOLERANCES ...

By Domenico Romano

What is a food intolerance?

In the field of science of feeding, and not only, is very fashion talking about food intolerance.

As a primary thing, it is important to underline that there are many food intolerances that also show up after having eaten a particular food (good shot on the right taken from "pictures and laughs"!!!)

The European Academy of Allergology and Clinical Immunology, thanks to numerous studies conducted by experts doctors, defined the presence of reactions to food, some of them are considered toxic, some other not.

The toxic reactions show up due to the presence of a chemical compound that is harmful for the human body (think about poisoned fungi or methanol wine), while the non toxin reaction are the ones that depends on susceptibility of the single person and how he/she responds to the assumption of food, recognizing the allergy or food intolerance.

It is a general opinion including the intolerances as particular conditions that do not determine reactions against food due to an immediate hypersensitivity as it happens for the typical food allergies.

It is necessary and important to understand what you mean by food intolerance and be able to recognize different situations that can show up.

Medicine, with a great displeasure of patients but also of doctors who do it, can not be always considered as a perfect science because it has so many differences and interpretations that can display different points of view and it is not easy to determine certain and precise conditions.

Which are the characteristics of food intolerance?

It is possible to trace some general characteristic:

- the food intolerance can appear with the first symptomatic manifestations from 1 to 36 hours after the assumption of food, and not immediately.
- it is usually a dependent dosage. The clinical manifestations vary proportionally according to the quantity of food eaten.
- our body can develop a "tolerance threshold" to one particular food and till that threshold (this means the eaten molecular quantity) can not show any symptoms.

Food intolerances involve different organic systems as for examples the Central Nervous System, the Urine System, the Cutaneous and the Gastroenteric ones, saying that not only the Immune System is involved.

How to recognize a food intolerance?

There are not any precise and specific guidelines about the subject, but it is possible to recognize different alterations that show up in people affected by food intolerance.

The changing, more frequently described, are cephalaea, gastrointestinal problems (swellings, colitis, meteorisms, constipation or diarrhea), mood's alterations, cutaneous alterations and also the ones at the level of the respiratory system.

All the signs and symptoms above told are an alarm bell for different organic pathologies and that is why when they appear is better to immediately go to the doctor who will plan and manage a diagnostic iter that excludes the presence of these pathologies that goes into the different diagnosis with food intolerances.

Which are the tests or exams that we can take to make a diagnosis possible?

With the advent of specialists for food medicine, many tests took place to recognize the foods that develop or should develop intolerances. The term "should" is due to the fact that at the international level, the specificity and sensibility of these tests have not been recognized from a scientific point of view.

There are several types of tests.

- Test done with blood. Sample of blood are put in contact with the type of food we evaluate to be allergic, and then we evaluate the response of a particular category of white globules, neutrophil granulocytes;
- Test of muscular tension. It uses the concept for which the muscular-tensive force seems to decrease when it gets in contact with the food;
- Physikinesiologic test;
- Test of electric nature. These are the last generation tests: test Voll of acupuncture and the famous Vega test. ([Do you want to know more? CLICK HERE](#))

Despite the possibility of feedback of these tests, the International scientific community checked that only four substances are able to determine the intolerance, and these substances are: lactose, fructose, sorbitol and gluten (celiac disease). The intolerance to sugars is the most spread and it is due to a enzymatic deficit which does not allow the splitting at the intestinal level of these elements that recall some liquids in the lumen, determining a symptomatologic and gastrointestinal procession; the intolerance to gluten is instead the previous step to the development of the celiac disease, and this is why we talk more about intolerance to gluten instead of celiac disease with a borderline symptomatology. For this last one we need a diagnostic and specific study.

What can I do if I suspect a food intolerance?

Besides reminding that it is very important to maintain healthy habits and especially a healthy alimentation (with a balance diet), the first step to take is the one, as already remembered, to surely exclude organic pathologies. Once you know there is not any pathology, it is necessary to pay attention when the intolerance shows up, how it reacts and how dangerous is the symptom. If it is possible, you should associate the appearance of the signs and symptoms to some food you ate, so we can try to find a solution to this problem: you basically do not have to eat that food ever again.

If the disturbs are related to the assumption of milk for example, it is necessary to change the regular diet so that you eliminate all the foods that contain lactose for a certain amount of time, or the one that seems to be related to it. On the other hand, if you feel that the intolerance is due to the fructose, you need to avoid all the fruits and some sweeteners that use this type of sugar. The privation of this food should last for about 2-3 weeks.

This period of time it is necessary to evacuate the persistence or the disappearance of the symptom; if you have a great improvement of the condition, then there is a great percentage of possibility that your problems derive from this food.

Except for the gluten, which has a tolerance threshold very close to zero, the others foods you eliminate due to the intolerance should be reintegrated in your diet because they are very important for your health; you need to reintegrate them easily trying to eat the minimum amount of that food you need for your metabolic need.

In medicine everything is true, and also the contrary of everything is true, but everything is not what it looks like.

If man wants to start with certainties, then he'll end up with doubts; but if he is happy to start with doubts, then he will end up with certainties - Francis Bacon-

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