

ALLERGIC DISORDERS

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Allergy is a word very well-known now-a-days. People call it "The Doctors' Dilemma", and are often heard saying, "What the Doctors can't diagnose, they call Allergy." Some patients often ask me "Doctor, have you any medicine for Allergy." Our books do not have any mention of Allergy, but our *Materia Medica* and *Therapeutics* are full of symptoms which are clear manifestations of Allergy.

What is Allergy? Generally speaking, Allergy is the reaction of body tissues, to substances that are inimical and poison to them. Technically speaking—Histamine when released in the blood stream gives rise to a chain of reactions in the organs and tissues which may appear in the form of sneezing, giddiness, hyperæmia of the skin, urticaria, dyspnoea and anaphylactic shock etc. Histamine is produced in the body, whenever tissues or the organs are affected by substances inimical to them, or are affected by trauma. Proteins are the foods of the tissues, they are composed of some 20 Amino-Acids, Histidine is one of them. Whenever the Carbon-di-oxide is removed from it, as happens when the tissues are attacked by inimical foreign substances, Histidine decomposes into Histamine, and under its toxic effects the tissues suffer. Their sufferings are the allergic reactions, which may occur in any part of the body, from the hair to the intestines.

Allergic reactions have become common during the last two decades, and it is during the last two decades that our ways of living also have undergone great changes. Daily we are finding new developments, which are taking us away from nature. There is a race for making everything synthetic. We wear clothes made of synthetic fibres, we eat synthetic food, we take synthetically prepared drugs, we live in synthetically created atmosphere of air-conditioning.

Our body wants whatever is consistent with it, and if we provide that, it serves us best. If we force disagreeable things on it, it revolts, just as when we put kerosene in our car in place of

petrol, we cannot expect it to run. If we force a lion to eat carrots it will get diarrhoea, similarly the human system reacts to inimical things. If we eat disagreeable food, the intestines refuse it and we get diarrhoea. If disagreeable substances are in minute quantities, they are absorbed along with the food, and it is when they reach the sensitive tissues, that the chain of allergic reactions start. The intensity of the reactions is related to the potency of the allergen.

Histamine produces dilatation of the arteries and paralysis of the capillaries, resulting in a general flushing of the skin, systolic Blood Pressure falls slightly, but the diastolic falls considerably, the pulse rate rises. Histamine increases the permeability of the capillaries, so that the protein and fluid escape from the vessels and get into the tissue spaces, causing oedema. Oedema of the lungs causes difficulty of breathing and even death. If the blood pressure constantly remains below 60 mm. hg. for some-time, the tissues suffer malnutrition, ultimately the higher centres of the brain suffer from poor nutrition, leading to circulatory collapse. This is the picture of an acute form of allergic reaction. The often heard-of deaths after pencillin injections had these chains of allergic reactions. The other forms of allergens that react slowly give rise to milder forms of allergy, viz. there may be only a redness of the eyes, or acute coryza-like symptoms, or severe vomiting, urticaria, oedema etc. varying in site and intensity.

We wear clothes made of synthetic fibres, which can cause contact dermatitis. We are given antibiotics, which can give rise to fungus infections. The use of the corticosteroids can produce asthma or skin diseases. We use Vitamin B Complex and often develop gastritis. We take the anti-histaminics and become subject to Rhinitis or Eosinophilia. By taking the tranquilizers we can develop psychic disorders. In this way the modern allopathic drugs are constantly exposing us to allergies. Is this the service the so-called Modern Medicine on the development of which huge amounts are being spent, doing to the humanity? The modern allopath is causing hazards for which he has no remedy. He is in a way also helpless—being entirely in the hands of the mighty commercial firms of drug manufacturers who have captured them by giving them the so-called 'Wonder Drugs'. Gone are the

days when the allopathic practitioners used to write prescriptions, using their skill. Their prescriptions used to be their achievements just two decades ago, but the modern allopath has not much use of skill for writing his prescriptions. The drug manufacturers decide what the doctor should prescribe, he has only to work on a trial and error basis. If chloromycetin fails to bring down the temperature, the doctor cannot alter its composition, he will have to give something else, say synermycin, or if that too is ineffective he will have to probably give Tetracycline—thus loading the poor patient with more and more poisons till the fever comes down. Then come into play aftereffects, which are treated with some antihistaminics. All these drugs are synthetic preparations, often have Histamine-like substances present in them, which are almost certain to upset the poor patient's system, sooner or later. Even the body requirements like vitamins, are synthetic preparation. The modern allopath does not use tinctures and extracts, like his predecessors, his mixtures are generally composed of readymade cough syrups or B Complex etc. The use, rather abuse of the broad spectrum antibiotics is a great hazard, and we daily meet cases, where they have given rise to serious allergic disorders. The slow and mild reaction of these drugs causes slow and mild reaction of Histamine in the tissues, and we observe allergic disorders in different and varied forms.

On the food front again, we are faced with similar Allergens. We are in the midst of a "Synthetic Era" rather an age of chemicals. The current trends in science are to attempt at synthesizing every thing. The food, the drugs, the other materials of daily use are all being made in the laboratories. In order to be modern we are leaving behind natural things, which are rather considered obsolete. We may excel nature, but cannot make things as nature makes them, because we are still ignorant of so many unknown constituents in any given natural substance. In the west, there is not only complete mechanization but also complete chemicalization of agriculture. The soil gets a regular dose of chemicals and poisons sprayed and dusted into it at different stages, these fertilizers and insecticides all saturate the plants with their poisons. Then, next, the fumigation with cynogen gas etc. lend their share to the matured wheat. Does all this chemicalization

leave the wheat unaffected? The use of chemical manure in place of natural manure has become quite popular in our country too, as the things grown on them grow quicker and bigger in size. The chemical fertilizers increase the carbohydrate contents of the produce and reduce the protein contents, moreover the amino-acid composition of the proteins is also not so complete and natural, as to provide the necessary nutrition. Moreover the Histidine in these proteins is sometimes so incomplete that it decomposes in the system and thus causes allergic disorders.

Preservation and dehydration of foods involve certain chemical processes, the chemicals thus used stay in the food and irritate the system, often giving rise to allergic reactions. People are developing taste for 'out of season' fruits and vegetables, which are obtainable in preserved and dehydrated forms, if these are avoided, the chemicals that go with them may not enter our systems.

I have read recently that they are going to manufacture tobacco, coffee and tea synthetically—in order to eliminate the toxic substances that are present in them, that is there will be tea without tannin, coffee without caffeine, and tobacco without nicotine. What will be the effect of these product on our system has to be seen. If this race for synthetization of articles of daily human needs goes on at this pace, either our systems will become amenable to the allergens, or we will have to endure allergic disorders, because without the removal of the cause there cannot be any cure.*

* Read at the meeting of the Meerut Homœopathic Assn. Meerut, U.P. on 10.4.1964.