

Allergic Diseases SIG

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ALLERGIC DISEASES DURING CORONAVIRUS

Greetings, members of the Allergic Diseases SIG! We hope that you are staying well during these unprecedented times. For our families with allergic diseases, this has been a particularly stressful time. We've heard from many patients that they are concerned about whether or not their children are at greater risk for severe symptoms from the virus, whether they will be able to find safe foods, and how to plan for emergency situations such as anaphylaxis while trying to avoid added risk of contracting the virus by visiting the Emergency Department. As we all work to provide supportive care to our patients during the pandemic, the Allergic Diseases SIG wanted to share a number of helpful resources that may help address these common worries.

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

Q&A on COVID-19 and Food Allergies with Dr. Tom Casale
<https://www.foodallergy.org/fare-blog/qa-covid-19-and-food-allergies-dr-tom-casale>

Allergy Shopping, Cooking Tips for Coronavirus Times:
<https://www.allergicliving.com/2020/03/22/allergy-shopping-cooking-tips-for-coronavirus-times/>

Parent/Caregiver Guide to Helping Families Cope with COVID-19:
https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/factsheet/outbreak_factsheet_1.pdf

Coronavirus, Food Allergies and Mental Health: A Q&A With Dr. Gia Rosenblum
<https://www.foodallergy.org/fare-blog/coronavirus-food-allergies-and-mental-health-qa-dr-gia-rosenblum>

How to Help Children Cope During the Pandemic:
<https://www.foodallergy.org/fare-blog/how-help-children-cope-during-pandemic>

Coronavirus: What People with Asthma Need to Know:
<https://community.aafa.org/blog/coronavirus-2019-ncov-flu-what-people-with-asthma-need-to-know>

COVID-19 & Food Allergies
<https://www.allergicliving.com/covid-19-and-food-allergies/>

Meet New Members of the SIG Leadership:

Dr. Jennifer LeBovidge is an attending psychologist in the Atopic Dermatitis Center and the Food Allergy Program at Boston Children's Hospital and an Assistant Professor in Psychology at Harvard Medical School. She enjoys working with pre-doctoral interns and providing training experiences in interdisciplinary care for children with allergic diseases. Her recent research has focused on development of psychoeducational resources to support coping and self-management skills for children with atopic dermatitis and food allergies and their families. Dr. LeBovidge serves on the Scientific Advisory Committee of the National Eczema Association and the Medical Advisory Committee the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter.



Jennifer LeBovidge
SIG Co-Chair



Melissa Engel, MA
Student Representative

Melissa Engel is a Clinical Psychology PhD student at Emory University. Prior to beginning graduate school at Emory, Melissa received her MA in Developmental Psychology from the University of Minnesota. Her research focuses on pediatric chronic illness through a developmental psychopathology framework, with particular emphases on psychobiological mechanisms, stress, and resilience. Melissa is currently working on two studies related to allergic diseases. One project examines the intergenerational risk and protective factors linking maternal stress with early childhood atopic diseases while the other examines difficult social situations faced by adolescents with food allergies. Additionally, Melissa is highly involved with Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) through speaking at national conferences and planning teen programs. Pediatric psychology aside, Melissa is a certified yoga instructor and is currently writing a memoir.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:

Alix McLaughlin, B.A., is a graduate student at Eastern Michigan University mentored by Catherine Peterson, PhD. She has been a member of the Allergic Diseases SIG since 2017 and currently serves as one of the student representatives in the SIG leadership board. As part of a multi-site study at University of Michigan Medicine and Massachusetts General Hospital, she is collecting data for a study investigating anxiety and quality of life in children with IgE-mediated food allergies and their parents. Clinically, Alix is currently completing an external practicum with a private practice serving children with anxiety, depression, and behavioral problems, with a specialty in selective mutism. Alix has also been serving as an interventionist on a peer's dissertation project providing brief Acceptance and Commitment Therapy-based treatment for mothers of infants in the NICU. Alix is particularly interested in the continued development of parent-focused interventions in pediatric psychology to improve functioning and coping in children living with chronic illness, as well as their parents/families.



SPPAC Allergic Diseases Poster Award Winner: Alix McLaughlin

The Moderating Role of Parental Self-Efficacy on Parental Worry and Social Activity Limitation Associated with Pediatric Food Allergy

Authors: Alix M. McLaughlin, B.A., Tori Humiston, M.S., and Catherine Peterson, Ph.D.

Institution: Department of Psychology, Eastern Michigan University

Twitter Link: <https://twitter.com/AlixMMcLaughlin/status/1241111071236161537?s=20>

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have proposed that children and their parents may benefit from presenting with a “just right” level of anxiety since it may motivate parents to follow management plans without overgeneralizing or developing clinically significant anxiety (Klennert et al., 2015). Past research (Baptist et al., 2012; Knibb et al., 2016) has established associations between parental self-efficacy (SE) related to managing their child’s food allergy (FA) and parent QOL, but there has been limited examination of how parent variables predict child social outcomes. This study examined whether parental SE related to FA management moderates the association between parental worry and activity limitation of the child. We hypothesized that increased parental SE would reduce the strength of the association between higher parental worry and higher activity limitation, such that parents who feel confident in their ability to manage their child’s FA will be less likely to limit their child’s activity, regardless of worry.

METHODS

Parents of 218 children (age 1-18) with FA were recruited nationally through social media, email listservs, and paper flyers in pediatricians’ and allergists’ offices to complete an online survey. Measures included demographics, child FA characteristics, parental SE (Food Allergy Self-Efficacy Questionnaire; Baptist et al., 2012), parental worry (Parent Experience of Childhood Illness Scale Guilt and Worry subscale; Bonner et al., 2006), and social activity limitation (Social Activity Limitations Inventory; Peterson & Harrison, 2018).

RESULTS

Parents were predominantly between ages 26-45, female, White, and reported high levels of education (77% with college degree or greater). Children were predominantly female and White. Peanuts, tree nuts, eggs, and milk were the most common allergens, and the sample had an average of 3.09 (SD= 2.36) allergens per child. Correlations between parental worry, parental SE, and activity limitation are reported in Table 3 on poster along with measure means and standard deviations.

Child age was included as a covariate in the moderation analyses. Predictors (child age, SE, and worry) were entered in Step 1, and the interaction term was added in Step 2. The main effect of SE and worry remained significant indicating that part of the variance in activity limitation is still explained by these individual variables (see Table 4 on poster). However, the addition of the interaction term in Step 2 demonstrated a significant interaction effect and a significant change in overall variance explained ($\Delta R^2 = .05, p < .001$) by the model, $R^2 = .14, F(3, 213) = 8.35, p < .001$. Figure 1 suggests that for parents with high SE, the effect of worry on activity limitations was minimal and nonsignificant ($b = 0.47, SE = 1.10, p = .67$). That is, **parents with high SE reported relatively low levels of activity limitation across all levels of worry**. In contrast, for parents with low SE, the effect of worry on activity limitations was significant, ($b = 5.90, SE = 1.50, p < .001$). That is, **parents with low SE and high worry were more likely to restrict their child’s activities than those with low worry**.

CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

Parents who reported greater SE around their ability to manage their child’s FA were more likely to allow their child to be socially active regardless of their own worry, whereas parents with low SE were more likely to restrict activities as their worry increased. There are some limitations to the current study including the use of cross-sectional data, self-selection associated with online data collection, lack of diversity, and self-reported diagnosis of food allergy. This finding yields clinical implications, as it suggests that parents can experience high levels of worry about their child’s FA while still

allowing their child to participate in meaningful social activities, which are important for social and emotional development. Introducing parental SE as a treatment target may allow for parents to maintain an appropriate level of worry that is necessary for management of their child's FA without leading to over-limitation of social activities. Clinical interventions such as Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT; Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 2003), or other self-management programs that improve SE in chronic conditions (Marks & Allegrante, 2005) may be indicated based on this research. Future research should aim to replicate our findings in a longitudinal clinic-based study and examine effective methods for identifying low SE in parents of children with FA.

Food Allergy Awareness Week

May 10th – 16th, 2020

Food Allergy Awareness Week is a week devoted to spreading information about food allergies and how it impacts families. Many organizations are hosting educational events for clinicians, food allergy families, and the general public to increase knowledge about the science, management, and psychosocial impact of living with food allergy. Find the links below to some of these offerings:

Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE):

<https://www.foodallergy.org/take-action/food-allergy-awareness-week>

Check out different events all week long!

MAY 10	MAY 11	MAY 12	MAY 13	MAY 14	MAY 15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honor your food allergy heroes and join our Mother's Day Celebration Show us how you Rock your Teal and share using #TealTakeover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join us for a "Help Reduce the Risk in Infants" Facebook Live with Dr. Ruchi Gupta at 1:30 p.m. ET Double your donation to our Teal Appeal thanks to a matching gift from OWYN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in FARE's first Virtual Research Symposium at 12:00 p.m. ET Keep rocking your teal! #TealTakeover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the Top 9-Free Meal Challenge in honor of Anaphylaxis Awareness Day There's no such thing as too much teal! Keep your creativity going using #TealTakeover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join our webinar—Food Allergy 101: A Crash Course for the Newly Diagnosed We want to hear from you! Help us bring food allergy stories to the world with the FARE-E Tales Food Allergy Story Initiative Share your teal with #TealTakeover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn more about how FARE is creating educational resources and supporting research and other efforts that improve lives in the food allergy community Get a sneak peek to a new food allergy resource from a mom and doctor duo who cover what you need to know 



Kids With Food Allergies:

<https://www.kidswithfoodallergies.org/food-allergy-awareness-week-month.aspx>

Check this site for events celebrating other allergic conditions such as FPIES, EoE and asthma too!

Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Connection Team

On social media? Check out this link for ways to change your Facebook or Instagram Picture to show your support for food allergy!

<https://www.foodallergyawareness.org/education/food-allergy-awareness-initiatives/food-allergy-awareness-week-month/>



Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, New England Chapter

Register for family-friendly virtual events such as the Kyle Dine Concert and "No Biggie Bunch" story hour. Facebook or Instagram Picture to show your support for food allergy

<http://asthmaandallergies.org>