

such ADHD cases from our study. Only “classical ADHD” cases were selected.

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) was used for IQ evaluation of the children. WISC is a common test to evaluate a child’s cognitive and intellectual functioning and is an important tool for diagnosing learning disability(1). IQ status of the subjects was used to discriminate between mentally challenged individuals (with IQ <75) and normal children/ adolescents with poor scholastic achievements (IQ >75). The diagnosis of ADHD was based on DSM-IV- TR, the Conners’ Parents and Teachers Rating Scale and WISC. Subjects for the association study were selected as per the criteria in *Table I*.

**Kanchan Mukhopadhyay,**  
*Manovikas Biomedical Research and  
Diagnostic Center,  
482, Madudah, Plot 1-24,*

**TABLE I:** *Criteria for Selection of Study Subjects.*

DSM-IV	IQ (WISC)	Conners’ rating	Diagnosis
Qualified	>75	<12	Specific learning disability
Qualified	>75	>12	ADHDL

*Sec.-J, E.M. Bypass,  
Kolkata 700 107, West Bengal, India.*

#### REFERENCE

1. Reading and learning disabilities. A Publication of the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities. FS17, 4th Edition, February 2004.

## What Should be Done When Authors do not Respond

Studies, Views *etc.* are published in scientific journals to inform others regarding some new techniques, information or clarifications, which is routed through the Editor of the concerned journal. This correspondence is published as ‘Letter to Editor’ and ‘Response’ from the author(s).

But sometimes the authors do not respond to such correspondence. What recourses are available to the Editor? But the Editor may publish the queries or the counterpoints and state: “No response received from the authors despite several reminders’. But sometimes this

may not suffice. I would like to elaborate this by the recent example.

Two ‘Letters to Editor’ published in the September, 2005 issue of Indian Pediatrics(1,2) regarding one study raised some ethical issues(3). Editor’s note under both letters(1,2) stated: “No reply received from Agarkhadekar, *et al.*, despite several reminders”. This merits consideration by the scientific community.

Let us look at the current controversy. A study entitled “Avoidance of Food Allergens in Childhood Asthma” by Agarkhadekar, *et al.* was published in India Pediatrics(3). In the Abstract the authors had stated: “These results indicate that food avoidance may help in asthma control in children”. This statement

suggests that this intervention could provide some real benefit to asthmatic children. This intervention becomes highly significant because relief will be provided not by some new drugs, but simply by avoiding the offending food allergens.

I had raised some issues regarding the practical problems associated with the intervention(2), but, Dr. Sarpotdar had raised some issues concerning the methodology of the study(1). Non-response to Dr. Sarpotdar's queries casts a big question mark over the study itself.

As the study has been published in a reputed peer reviewed indexed journal, it may result in some unscientific interventions by some doctors, who may read this study but may be unaware about the questions raised by us and no response given by the authors.

The Editorial Board should constitute an Experts Committee to review the study and give its recommendations regarding the methodology and results. The Editorial Board should then publish the findings of the Committee along with a response from the authors, who be offered another chance. Depending on the outcome of this exercise the journal should take appropriate action, including, if necessary, the notification of 'withdrawing' the publication of the study so that some wrong inferences are not drawn from such studies.

**Yash Paul,**  
*A-D-7, Devi Marg,  
Bani Park, Jaipur 302 016, India.  
E-mail: dryashpaul2003@yahoo.com*

## REFERENCES

1. Sarpotdar VG. Avoidance of Food Allergens in Childhood Asthma. *Indian Pediatr* 2005; 42: 963-964.
2. Paul Y. Avoidance of Food Allergens in Asthmatics. *Indian Pediatr* 2005; 42: 964.
3. Agardhedkar SR, Bapat HB, Bapat BN. Avoidance of Food Allergens in Childhood Asthma. *Indian Pediatr* 2005; 42: 362-366.

## Reply

Dr. Yash Paul has raised some pertinent questions regarding non-response of author to queries raised against a published manuscript. With regards to the present case, attempts were made to contact the authors, but came to know that the corresponding author had expired! And, hence the non-response.

Other suggestions were duly considered by the Editorial Board. Following comment are made:

Firstly, Editorial Board publishes only peer reviewed manuscripts and it will not be appropriate to re-review its own publications.

The Editorial Board has no control over authors lack of response, but by publishing the comments of researchers/readers, the journal is increasing the reader's awareness of the lacunae of the study.

There are clear guidelines for withdrawal of a published article. Design issues and non-response by authors are not amongst the criteria.

**Editorial Board**  
*Indian Pediatrics*