

Food Items and Asthma

Mostly the parents of asthmatic children say that they do not give banana, curd and rice to their children during the attack of asthma. We, the doctors have been telling these parents that these food items do not have any adverse effect on cough, a specific food item may act as an allergen to a particular individual, but not to all persons. In a small study published in April 2005 issue of Indian Pediatrics Agarkhadekar, *et al.* have stated that avoidance of many food items has beneficial affect on asthmatic children. I seek comments and advice from the experts on role of these food items in asthmatic children. The issues are not concerning some rare or uncommon conditions but are related to every day practice.

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Food Items and Asthma (Reply)

1. Food allergy is an uncommon cause of bronchial asthma.

2. Even if it is, it is usually combined with atopic features at other places like skin, *etc.*
3. Parents conventionally stop lot of foods which they think/perceive as precipitating/trigger factors for an acute exacerbation of asthma.
4. However, in almost all, history in detail will reveal that attacks of acute asthma do not happen on every exposure to the offending food.
5. Moreover, once controlled on inhaled corticosteroids they realize that withholding various food items was not required.
6. As an advise they should be told to avoid offending items like preservatives and coloring agents *i.e.*, they must avoid packed, preserved or artificially colored foods.

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