- Allergy



HEALTH

TAMING ALLERGIC RESPONSES

Allergic diseases such as asthma, atopic dermatitis, and food allergies have been increasing in frequency in recent years. Food allergies in particular affect millions of people worldwide – this includes allergies to foods such as milk, peanuts, eggs and shellfish. They are typically caused by the immune system being hypersensitive to substances in foods and the environment. Flavonoids are chemicals present in various fruits and vegetables. Specific flavonoids can help modulate the immune response and treat inflammation caused by these allergies.

In a recent study at Tokyo University of Science, researchers identified that kaempferol, a flavonoid found in spinach, kale and broccoli, produces an anti-inflammatory effect through regulatory T-cell development. Additionally, kaempferol suppressed several allergic symptoms associated with food allergies. The researchers suggest that the chemical structure of flavonoids may play a role in their ability to accelerate regulatory T-cell development. This has significant implications for how we treat allergies – regular intake of foods containing high amounts of flavonoids could serve as natural remedies to alleviate allergic symptoms. Further emphasising the importance of supplementing your daily diet with flavonoids, study lead Professor Chiharu Nishiyama said, "When taken as a daily food, they are expected to reduce allergies, inflammation, and autoimmune diseases that are caused or aggravated by excessive immune response."