

Book Review

by Kathi Head, ND

Allergy Free: An Alternative Medicine Definitive Guide

By **Konrad Kail, ND and Bobbi Lawrence with Burton Goldberg**

Alternativemedicine.com Books,

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I have just had the pleasure of perusing the latest book on allergies to hit bookstore shelves. I thought everything had already been said about allergies in previous books, but I was wrong. Whereas other allergy books I've examined approach allergies from a specific angle, such as outlining a specific allergy-relief diet, this book takes a very comprehensive and natural approach. Although the book is written for the general public, there is much valuable information for health care practitioners as well. Practitioners may want to have this book on hand to share with patients.

The book begins with a chapter explaining what allergies are, how they manifest in the body, what an antigen-antibody reaction is, etc. The book does not focus solely on actual allergic (IgE/IgG-mediated) reactions but also encompasses other reactions, including food and multiple chemical sensitivities. As the book proceeds, a discussion of the causes of allergies and sensitivities follows: early neonatal diet, vaccinations, impaired mucosal barriers in the respiratory tract, leaky gut syndrome, intestinal dysbiosis, hypochlorhydria, and toxic overload, to name some of the most important causes.

Practitioners may find the discussion of various types of allergy testing valuable. Some of the tests discussed include ELISA, RAST, scratch/patch test, SET, cytotoxic, ALCAT, provocative neutralization, electrodermal screening, elimination and challenge diet, Coca pulse test, applied kinesiology, and the Omura bi-digital o-ring test. In addition, a discussion of testing for the possible causes of allergy follows (heavy metal evaluations, digestive analysis, liver detoxification profiles, oxidative stress profiles, intestinal permeability tests, etc.).

The remaining two-thirds of the book describes solutions to the problem of allergies and sensitivities, beginning with chapters on prevention. Chapters on treatment approaches include therapeutic diets specific to certain allergy-associated conditions (arthritis, otitis media, ADD, migraines, inflammatory bowel disease, etc.). As increased intestinal permeability is considered one of the central issues in food-related allergies, an entire chapter is dedicated to healing a leaky gut. Other chapters include intestinal detoxification, support for the skin and the respiratory tract, nutritional and herbal supplements for symptom control, homeopathic and physical therapies, mind-body approaches, and a review of desensitization techniques.

The book is full of interesting case studies, sidebars, and at-a-glance charts. Icons in the margins direct the reader to more information, medical terminology definitions, and important contact information. The book is well referenced and recommended reading for all practitioners treating allergic or chemically-sensitive patients.