

You are in: **Health**

Wednesday, 3 May, 2000, 23:47 GMT 00:47 UK

## Food preservative 'causes allergy'

- Front Page
- World
- UK
- UK Politics
- Business
- Sci/Tech
- Health
- Background
- Briefings
- Medical notes
- Education
- Entertainment
- Talking Point
- In Depth
- AudioVideo



Allergy sufferers are given skin tests

A food additive extracted from artichokes and herbs may cause a severe allergic reaction, doctors have warned.

Inulin is increasingly used in a range of foods but the warning has been issued following the experience of a 39-year-old man.

He developed breathing difficulties, a cough and other allergic symptoms four times in two years.

His symptoms appeared just minutes after eating artichoke leaves, salsify - also known as black oyster plant or viper's grass - sweets containing inulin and a margarine made with the inulin found in chicory.

“**Allergic reactions to this dietary ingredient may be or may become more frequent than currently recognised**”

**Fabienne Gay-Crosier, University Hospital, Geneva**

"Because of its expanding use in processed foods, allergic reactions to this dietary ingredient may be or may become more frequent than currently recognised," said Fabienne Gay-Crosier and Conrad Hauser of the University Hospital in Geneva, Switzerland, and Georges Schreiber of Annemasse, France.

### Health benefits

### Search BBC News Online

GO

Advanced search options

**Launch console for latest audio/video**

- BBC RADIO NEWS**
- BBC ONE TV NEWS**
- WORLD NEWS SUMMARY**
- BBC NEWS 24 BULLETIN**
- PROGRAMMES GUIDE**

### See also:

- 10 Sep 99 | Health  
Living with allergies
- 15 Sep 99 | Health  
Bizarre antibodies offer allergy clues
- 17 Dec 99 | Health  
Allergy warning over processed food

### Internet links:

- American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
- British Allergy Foundation
- New England Journal of Medicine

The BBC is not responsible for the content of external internet sites

**Links to other Health stories are at the foot of the page.**

Although inulin has been used in foods for years, its popularity is increasing because of hopes that it might have health benefits, the doctors reported in a letter to the New England Journal of Medicine.

Inulin and its chemical cousin, known as oligofructose are now being added to an increasing number of industrially processed foods, such as candies, beverages, yoghurt, ice cream, chocolate, butter and breakfast cereals, they said.

It is used as a sugar and fat substitute that extends the shelf life of processed foods and can be used by diabetics.

In most countries, labelling laws require food processors to disclose if they have added inulin to a product.

---

 [E-mail this story to a friend](#)

---

### Links to more Health stories

In This Section



GO



[^^ Back to top](#)

[News Front Page](#) | [World](#) | [UK](#) | [UK Politics](#) | [Business](#) | [Sci/Tech](#) | [Health](#) | [Education](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Talking Point](#) | [In Depth](#) | [AudioVideo](#)

-----  
[To BBC Sport>>](#) | [To BBC Weather>>](#)  
-----

© [MMIII](#) | [News Sources](#) | [Privacy](#)