Some varieties of food intolerance in psychiatric patients: an overview.

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Foods may cause mental and behavioural symptoms by means of a variety of mechanisms. Food allergy is only one of many of these. The paper presents a brief overview of evidence, as of early 1982, concerning cerebral allergy, food addiction, the hypoglycaemias, caffeineism, hypersensitivity to chemical food additives, reactions to vasoactive amines in foods, and reactions attributed to neuropeptides formed from foods as causes of mental symptoms, with particular reference to psychiatric patients. It is concluded that although much work in this field remains to be done, enough is already known to benefit patients now if available knowledge is applied. An individual-centred environmental approach, extending beyond dietary factors if necessary, is recommended as more likely to help than a group-centred paradigm-based approach to treatment.

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