

JANUARY 30 – FEBRUARY 1, 2026

2026 ACG'S IBD SCHOOL & ACG BOARD OF GOVERNORS / ASGE BEST PRACTICES COURSE

ACG ASGE | **LAS VEGAS** |




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2026 ACG'S ENDOSCOPY SCHOOL & ACG / LGS REGIONAL POSTGRADUATE COURSE

MARCH 6-8, 2026 | HILTON NEW ORLEANS RIVERSIDE
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

ACG LGS | **Register online: meetings.gi.org**



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2026 ACG'S HEPATOLOGY SCHOOL
& ACG / FGS ANNUAL
SPRING SYMPOSIUM

MARCH 20-22, 2026 | HYATT REGENCY COCONUT POINT
NAPLES, FLORIDA

Register online: meetings.gi.org

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Virtual Grand Rounds universe.gi.org

Participating in the Webinar

Moderators:
Amit Gupta, MD, MHPEG

All attendees will be muted and will remain in "Listen Only Mode"

Type your questions here so that the moderator can see them. Not all questions will be answered but we will get to as many as possible.

A handout with the slides and room to take notes can be downloaded from your control panel.

Exit

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ACG Virtual Grand Rounds

Join us for upcoming Virtual Grand Rounds!





Week 06 International – Wednesday, February 4, 2026
 The Paradigm Shift from FMT to Live Biotherapeutic Products in the Treatment of Recurrent Clostridioides difficile Infection
 Faculty: Paul Feuerstadt, MD, FACP
 Moderator: Ronald K. Hsu, MD, FACP
7am Eastern




Week 06 – Thursday, February 5, 2026
 The Impact of Violence and Trauma on Patient Care: What the Gastroenterologist Needs to Know
 Faculty: Christina N. Awad MD,
 Moderator: Mark D. Hubner, MD
At Noon and 8pm Eastern

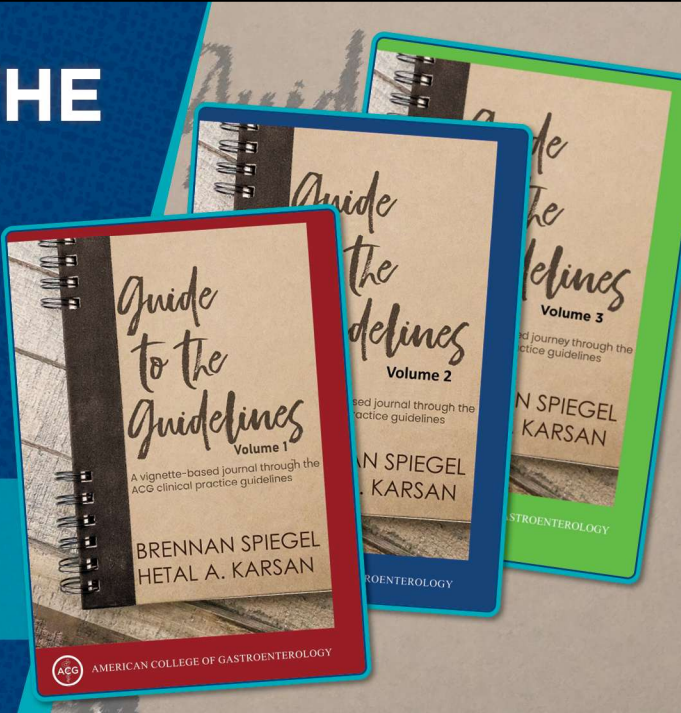
Visit gi.org/ACGVGR to Register

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Disclosures



Sarah K. McGill, MC, MSc, FACG:
 Research Funding for Investigator-Initiated study from EvoEndo and Revivacor.

*** Off Label Use: Oral cromolyn and long-acting antihistamines as adjuncts to manage food allergies, in addition to avoidant diet of food allergens.**



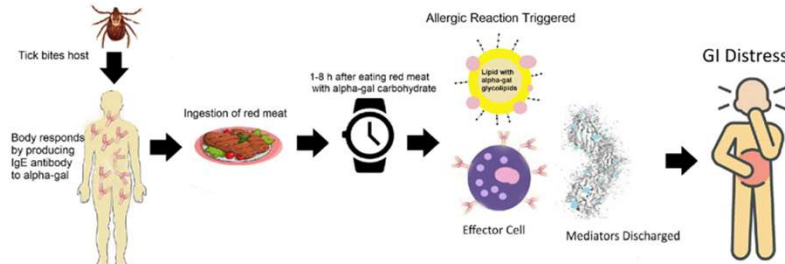
Amit Gupta, MD, MHPEG:
 No relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies.


**All of the relevant financial relationships listed for these individuals have been mitigated*

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Alpha-gal Syndrome: How to Detect and Manage GI's Newest Diagnosis





Sarah K. McGill, MD, MSc, FACG
 Professor of Medicine
 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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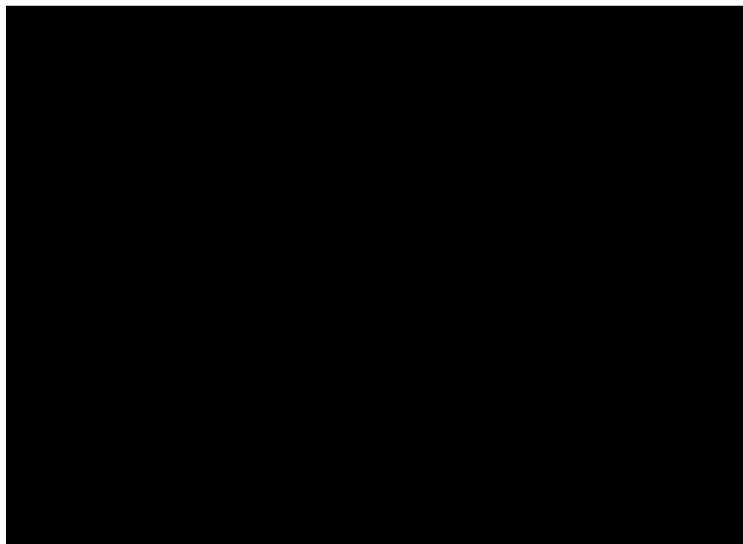
Objectives:

- Recognize alpha-gal syndrome as a new GI disease
- Understand how to diagnosis alpha-gal syndrome
- Understand how to manage it

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A Patient's Story: Meghan Kerns



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Alpha-gal Syndrome == tick bite associated allergy to a sugar present on the blood cells and tissues of all non-primate mammals (galactose-alpha-1,3-galactose)

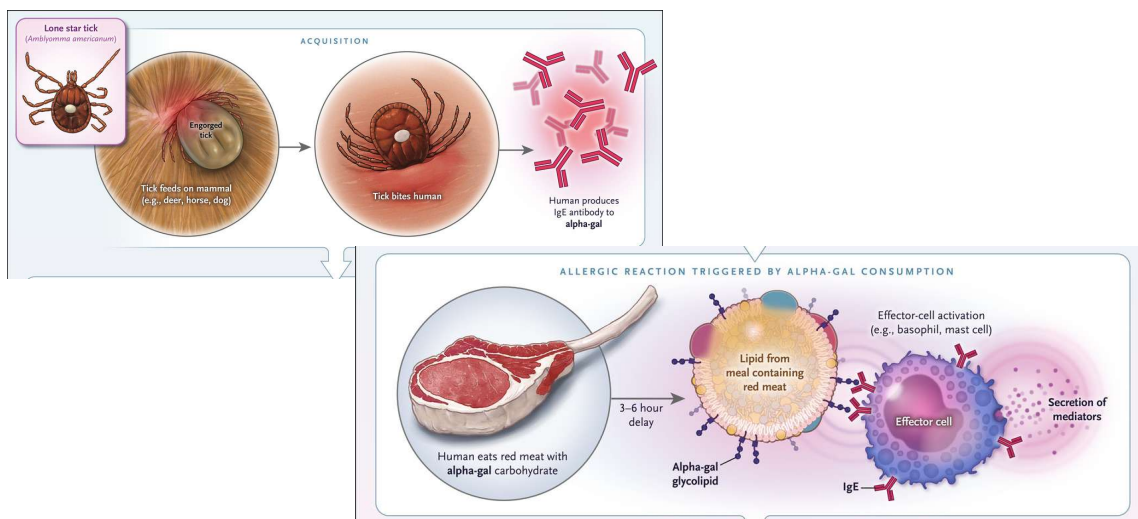
GI Alpha-gal Syndrome = syndrome manifesting as predominant or isolated GI symptoms



McGill Richards Commins. *Am J Gastroenterology* 2022

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Alpha-gal Syndrome Pathophysiology



Houchens et al, *NEJM* 2021.

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Alpha-gal Syndrome among the healers



Oncologists 2007 GI Docs, 2021

Allergists 2008 Transfusion Docs, 2025

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Alpha-gal Syndrome Symptoms





Abdominal pain,
diarrhea, nausea,
vomiting

Mabelane et al. 2019; Commins 2014





Hives, urticaria, angioedema
Anaphylaxis

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GI Alpha-gal Syndrome Symptoms: recurrent



- Nausea
- Heartburn
- Epigastric pain
- Vomiting
- Postprandial fullness
- Bloating
- Diffuse abdominal pain
- increased frequency of bowel movements
- loose or liquid bowel movements
- urgency
- tenesmus



Mabelane et al. 2019; Commins 2014; McGill 2021; Richards 2021

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Diagnosis Rule #1: Have a High Index of Suspicion



McGill et al. *Gastro* 2021; Richards and Richards. *Southern Medical Journal* 2021

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Alpha-gal Syndrome Screening



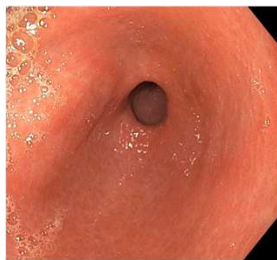
- "IBS-D"- recurrent, episodic diarrhea, urgency, bloating, abdominal pain
- Upper GI distress: epigastric pain, nausea, vomiting



- constipation
- constant abdominal pain
- only heartburn

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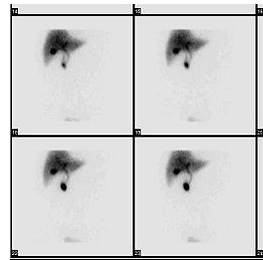
Many GI Alpha-gal Syndrome Patients Undergo Unnecessary GI testing /management



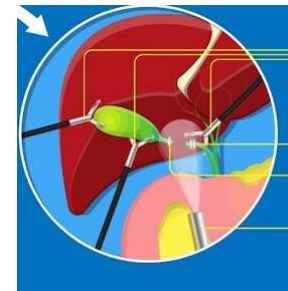
Endoscopies



Abdominal imaging



HIDA scan

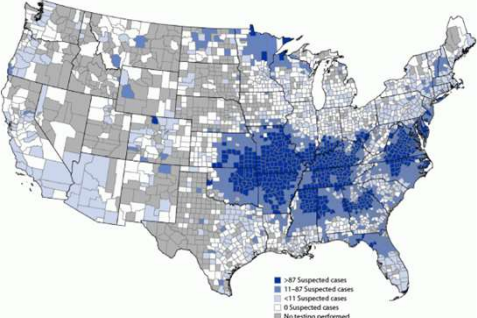



Laparoscopic cholecystectomy

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Diagnosis Rule #2: Know alpha-gal syndrome geography





Thompson et al. *Morbidity and Mortality* 2023
Centers for Disease Control

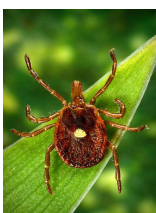
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Alpha-gal Syndrome exists throughout the world





U.S. →
Lone Star Tick
Amblyomma americanum







France & Sweden →
Ixodes Ricinus (castor bean tick)






South Africa →
Ascariasis





Australia →
Ixodes holocyclus




Zeemaps.com

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Diagnosis Rule #3: Serum alpha-gal IgE is the screening test



Component	9 d ago
Ref Range & Units	
Alpha-gal IgE	1.1
<small><0.1 kUA/L</small>	
Resulting Agency	UNCH MCL

Narrative

Concentration /Class Level Chart

kU/L	Level of Allergy	Class
<0.35	Absent	0
0.35-0.70	Low	1
0.70-3.50	Moderate	2
3.50-17.5	High	3
17.5-50.0	Very High	4
50-100	Very High	5
>100	Very High	6

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Diagnosis Rule #4: Put patients on a two-month trial of strict alpha-Gal avoidance + FOLLOW UP





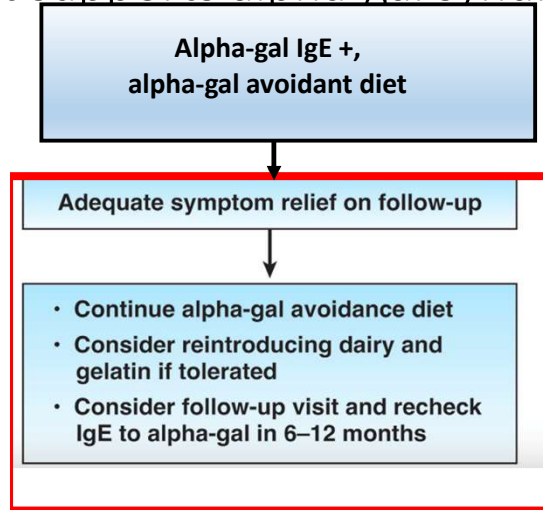


Cross-contamination



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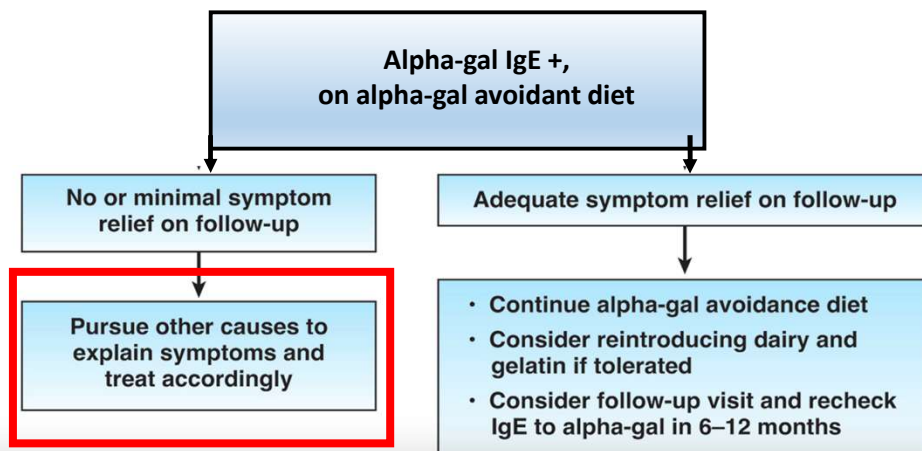
Adequate symptom improvement on alpha-gal avoidance diet supports alpha-gal syndrome diagnosis



McGill, Al Hashash, Platts-Mills. *Clinical Gastro Hep* 2023

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If symptoms do not improve on alpha-gal avoidant diet, consider other causes




McGill, Al Hashash, Platts-Mills. *Clinical Gastro Hep* 2023

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CLINICAL PRACTICE UPDATE

AGA Clinical Practice Update on Alpha-Gal Syndrome for the GI Clinician: Commentary



Sarah K. McGill,¹ Jana G. Hashash,^{2,3} and Thomas A. Platts-Mills⁴

822 THE RED SECTION

APPROACH IT

Suddenly Steakless: A Gastroenterologist's Guide to Managing Alpha-Gal Allergy


Sarah K. McGill, MD, MSc, FACP¹, Robert D. Richards Jr, MD² and Scott P. Commins, MD, PhD³
Am J Gastroenterol 2022;117:822–826. <https://doi.org/10.14309/ajg.0000000000001765>; published online April 8, 2022

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Your patient is better on alpha-gal avoidant diet.

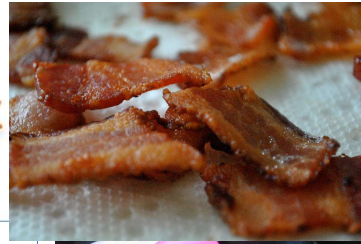
Now what?



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Alpha-Gal Management: Avoid the Allergen



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Avoiding the Allergen is not so easy: Do these have alpha-gal?



knowledgeable dietician/
mentor



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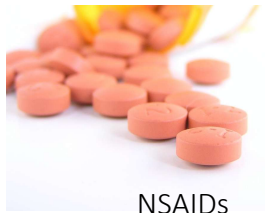
Co-factors can make reactions more likely



alcohol



exertion



NSAIDs

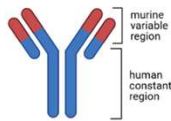
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IBD Biologics, Heparin can contain alpha-gal too



urticaria/anaphylaxis



infliximab



heparin



Chung CH et al. *N Engl J Med* 2008
O'Neil et al. *J Clin Onc* 2007





IBD

Muratore Barnes Long Herfarth McGill. *Dig Dis Sci* 2024

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Omalizumab : anti-IgE monoclonal antibody for food allergies



- FDA-approved indication: “IgE-mediated food allergy in adult and pediatric patients for the reduction of allergic reactions (Type I), including anaphylaxis, that may occur with accidental exposure to one or more foods. To be used in conjunction with food allergen avoidance”
- monthly subcutaneous injection
- First 3 injections in a doctor’s office
- potential adverse events: fever, injection site reactions, parasitic infection

Wood et al. *New England J Medicine* 2024


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Omalizumab : anti-IgE monoclonal antibody for food allergies

Doesn't seem to help GI symptoms as much

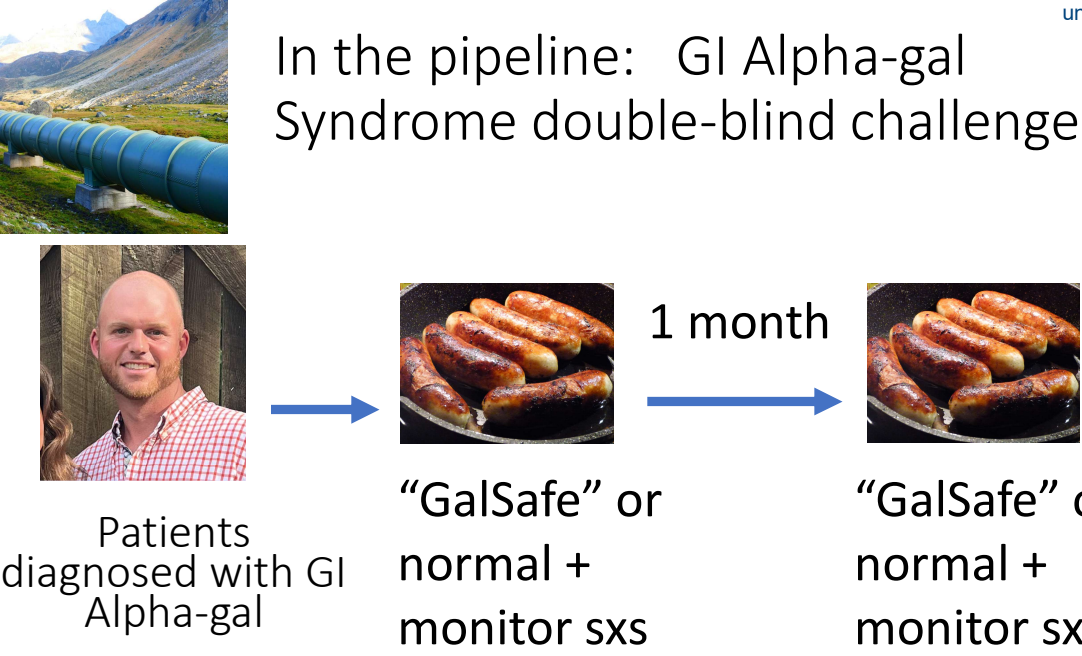


Scott Commings, Allergist

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In the pipeline: GI Alpha-gal Syndrome double-blind challenge



Patients diagnosed with GI Alpha-gal → “GalSafe” or normal + monitor sxs → 1 month → “GalSafe” or normal + monitor sxs

clinicaltrials.gov.

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Take-Home Points

- Alpha-gal syndrome can cause recurrent isolated GI distress that patients do not link to mammalian meat consumption, particularly abdominal pain with other symptoms like nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, bloating and urgency to defecate
- Current testing is serum IgE alpha gal antibodies and avoidant diet trial, and current management is mammalian meat- and products- avoidant diet
- Omalizumab is on-label for food allergies, but specific data on efficacy in GI alpha-gal syndrome is scarce

Mabelane et al. 2019; Commins 2014; McGill 2021; Richards 2021

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Key References

1. Platts-Mills TAE, Commins SP, Biedermann T, et al. On the cause and consequences of IgE to galactose-alpha-1,3-galactose: a report from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Workshop on understanding IgE-mediated mammalian meat allergy. *J Allergy Clin Immunol* 2020; 145:1061–1071.
2. Croglia MP, Commins SP, McGill SK. Isolated gastrointestinal alpha-gal meat allergy is a cause for gastrointestinal distress without anaphylaxis. *Gastroenterology* 2021; 160:2178–2180 e1.
3. Richards NE, Richards RD Jr. Alpha-gal allergy as a cause of intestinal symptoms in a gastroenterology community practice. *South Med J* 2021;114:169–173.
4. Commins SP, Satinover SM, Hosen J, et al. Delayed anaphylaxis, angioedema, or urticaria after consumption of red meat in patients with IgE antibodies specific for galactose- alpha-1,3-galactose. *J Allergy Clin Immunol* 2009; 123:426–433.
5. Commins SP, James HR, Stevens W, et al. Delayed clinical and ex vivo response to mammalian meat in patients with IgE to galactose-alpha-1,3-galactose. *J Allergy Clin Immunol* 2014; 134:108–115.
6. Mabelane T, Basera W, Botha M, et al. Predictive values of alpha-gal IgE levels and alpha-gal IgE: total IgE ratio and oral food challenge-proven meat allergy in a population with a high prevalence of reported red meat allergy. *Pediatr Allergy Immunol* 2018;29:841–849.

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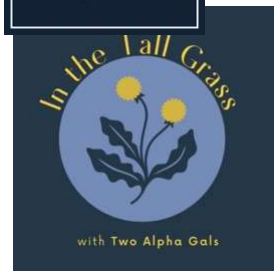


Thank you!

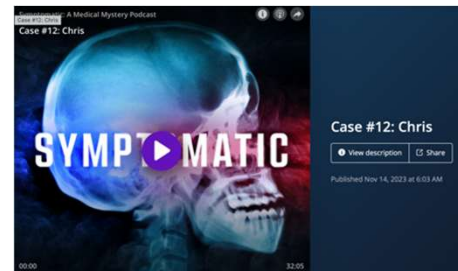
Scott Commins, Bob Richards, Bob Sandler, Nick Shaheen, CEDAS, Morgan Goins, Thomas Platts-Mills, Jana El-Hashash, Mike Croglia, Bobby Ijeoma, Alicia Muratore, Ed Barnes, Millie Long, Chris Lee, Twitter: @SarahMcGillMD



Alpha-gal podcasts



Episode: Charles Green




Episode: Chris


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Questions



Sarah K. McGill, MC, Msc, FACG



Amit Gupta, MD, MHPEG

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and the Crohn's & Colitis Foundation

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