

What is eosinophilic enteropathy?

by Susan P. Arena

Eosinophilic enteropathy is a very complicated, complex disease and it comes in several forms.

Basically eosinophilic enteropathy is a disease in which one type of white blood cells (eosinophils) are found in higher than normal amounts in the digestive system.

It comes in several forms which are broken down into Primary and Secondary types.

The Primary type is subdivided into Allergic, Non-allergic and Familial (inherited). In the Allergic type, the

special white blood cells reacts to food allergies. In the Non-allergic form, there is no obvious cause for the high number of eosinophils. It is thought that the large number of eosinophils is the results of the the body attacking itself and the is considered to be an autoimmune condition. This is the type 10-year-old Matt has.

The Secondary type occurs when parasites such as worms or flukes invade the body or as a part of another eosinophilic condition.

The disease is also categorized by the location within the digestive system. For example, eosinophilic

esophagitis is when high amount of these white blood cells occur only in the esophagus or tube between the mouth and the stomach. Other categories include occurrences in the stomach, small intestine, upper small intestine, large intestine and combinations of different areas of the digestive systems.

There is no know cure and the disease can severely damage the portion of the digestive system it attacks.

For more information on Eosinophilic Enteropathy, visit the American Partnership for Eosinophilic Disorders at <www.apfed.org>.
