



Consumer Perception of Thresholds

IFST Spring Conference 2015

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What I will cover...

- Who we are
- Background to a global survey on consumer perception of thresholds
- Headline results of the survey
- Focus on the results from the UK
- What the findings tell us

Who we are

- The only UK-wide charity solely supporting people at risk from severe allergic reactions
- For 20 years we've provided information/ support to patients and carers
- We work with healthcare professionals, the food industry/ pharmaceutical companies for better understanding of severe allergies
- We empower patients, carers and healthcare professionals through our Allergy Wise online training
- We actively campaign for better allergy care

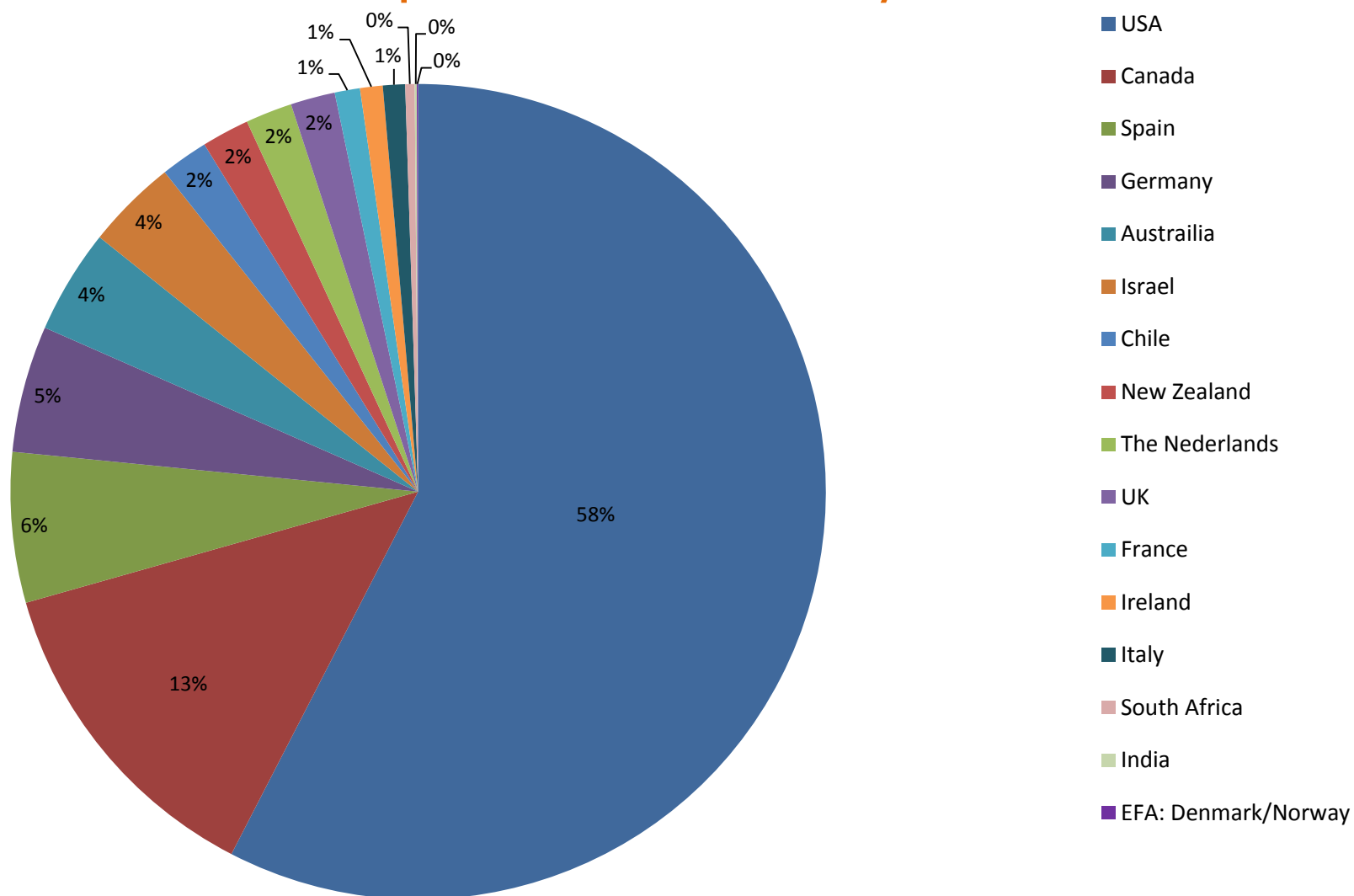
Global Survey on Thresholds Objectives

- Gather information on consumer perspective of food allergen thresholds from many countries
- Use results to advance the dialogue amongst key stakeholders (i.e. food industry, clinicians, regulators and patient groups)
- Help identify ways to effectively communicate threshold concepts to consumers and get their feedback
- Results helpful to inform discussions
- Not a scientific research study

Survey: Process

- Coordinated by Anaphylaxis Canada
- Committee – Canada, US, UK, Australia, Belgium, Italy
- Local medical advisors reviewed questions.
- Recruitment: patient organisation members, websites, social media, 1 group placed a newspaper ad
- Most used Survey Monkey
- Survey open for a two week period

Respondents from each country that took part in the survey



Respondents - Total: 9,689

- Parents: 81%
- Food allergic individuals: 24%
- Had an allergic reactions: 94%

Symptoms ranged from mild to moderate.

- Had a severe allergic reaction: 68%
 - Such as anaphylaxis; difficulty breathing, swelling of the tongue, lips, face or throat.

Top food allergies

- **Peanut**

No.1: US, Canada, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Netherlands, UK, Ireland, South Africa

- **Tree Nuts**

No.1: Netherlands, France

- **Milk**

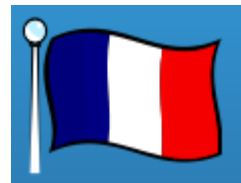
No.1: Spain, Israel, Chile, Italy

- **Wheat**

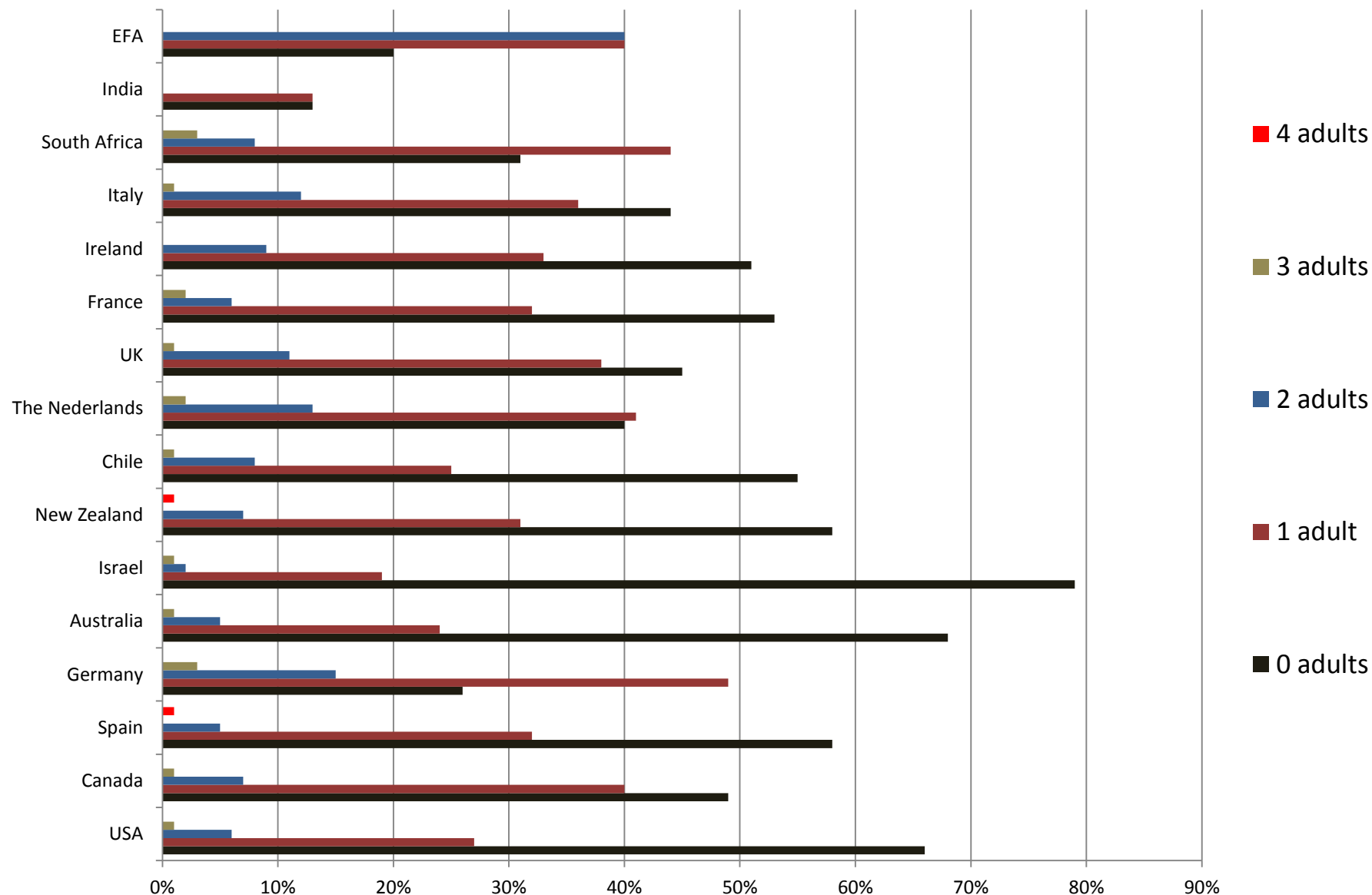
No.1: India

- **Eggs and fish also high in most countries**

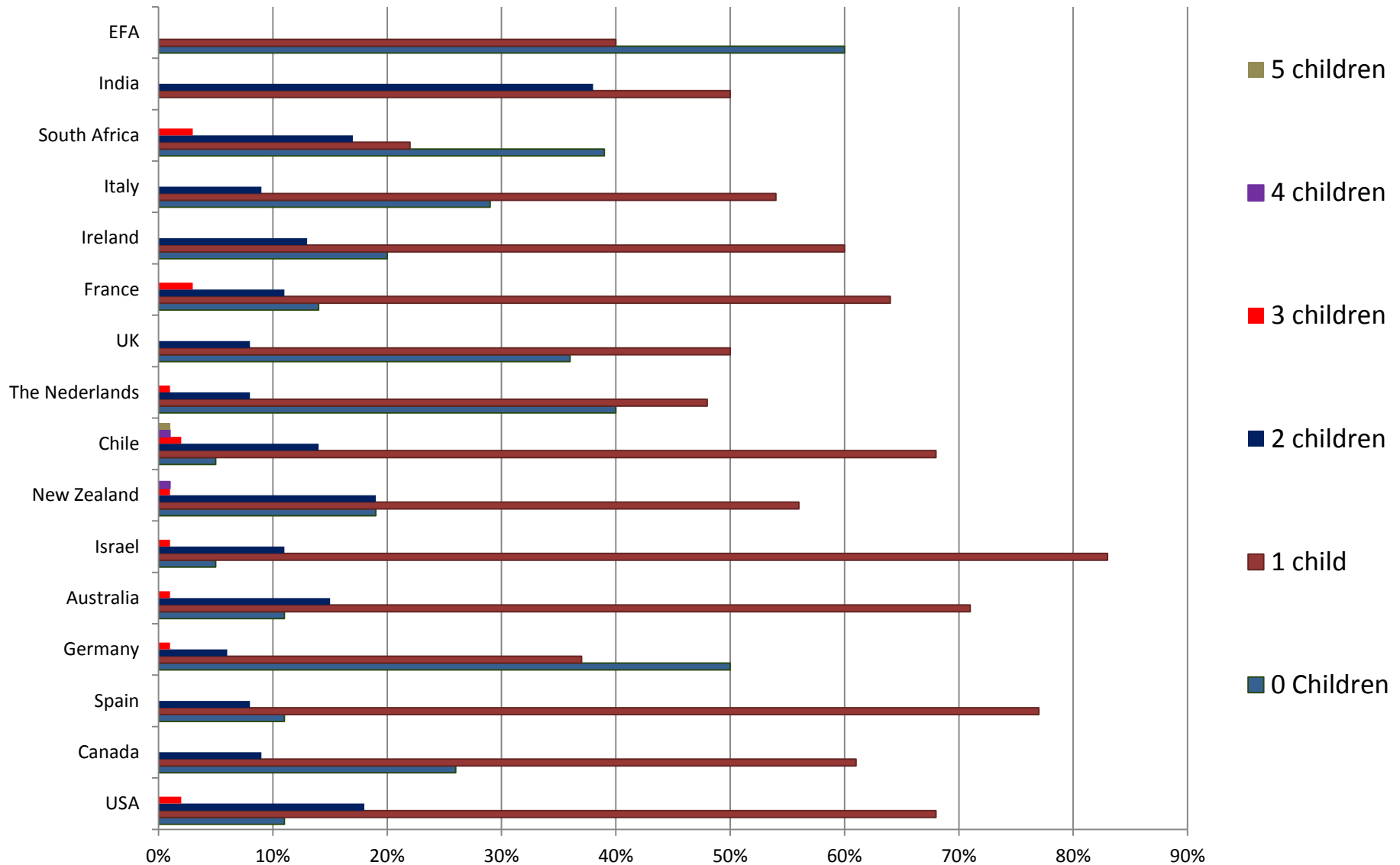
International Results



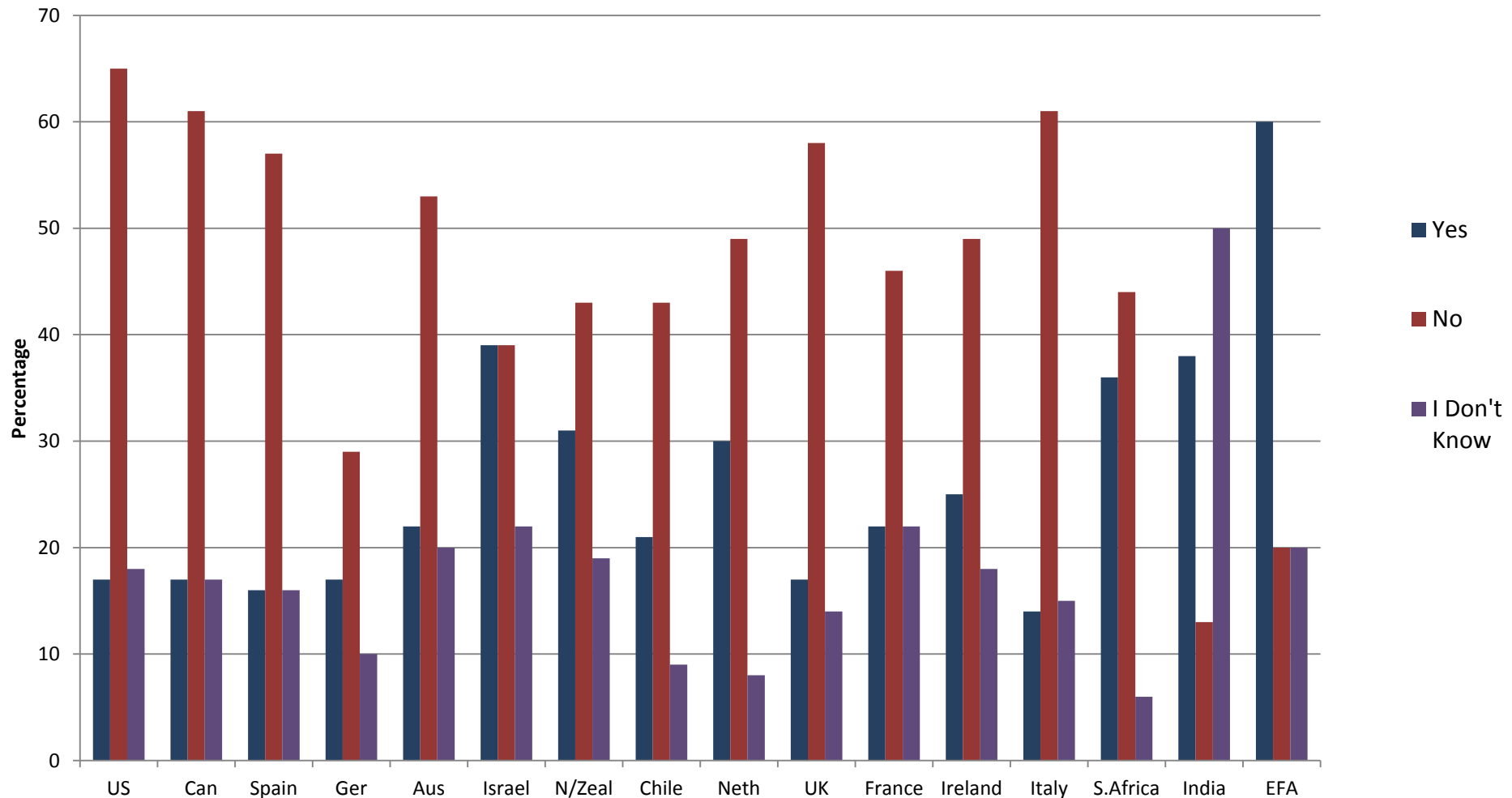
No. adults in the household with food allergies



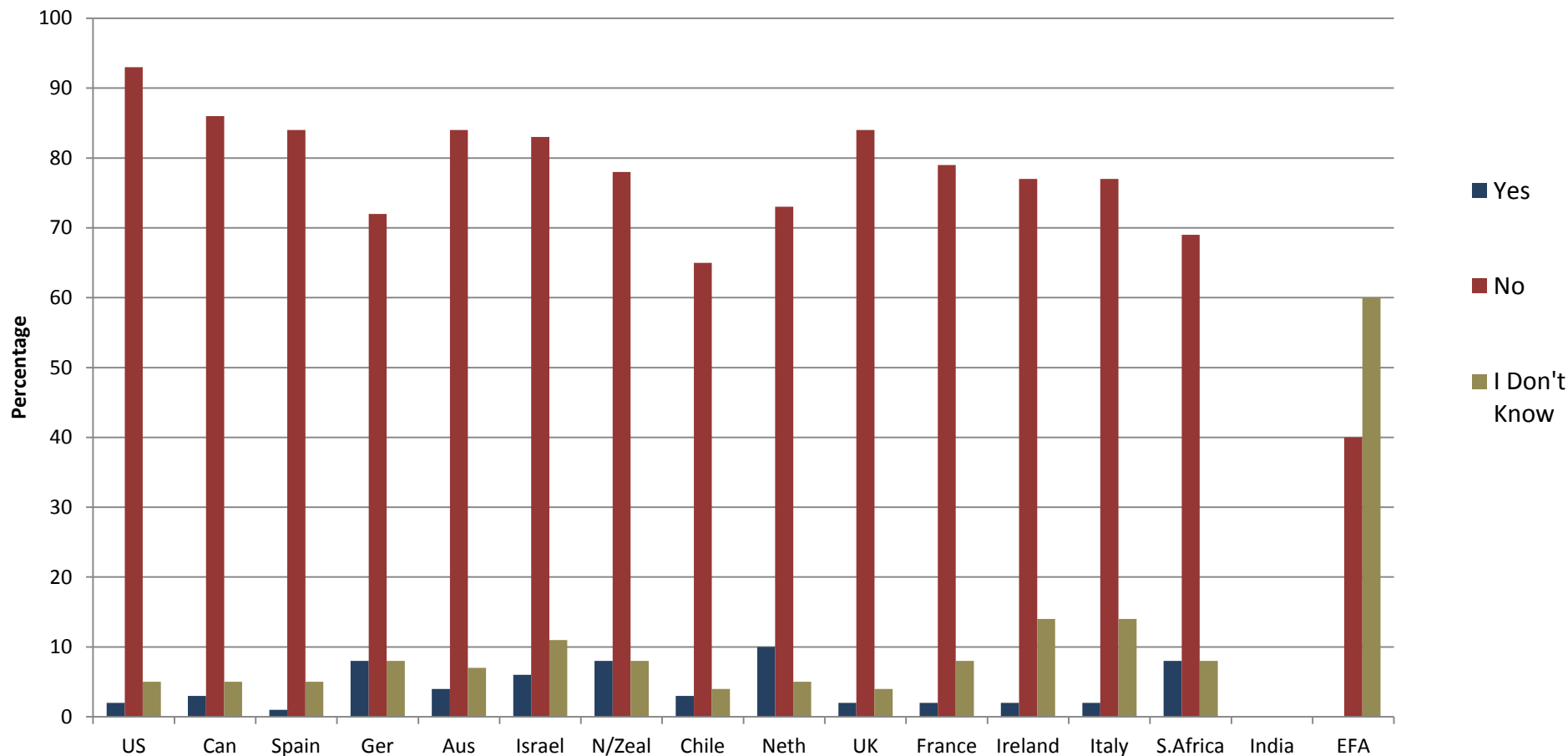
Number of children (< 18 yrs) in the household with food allergies



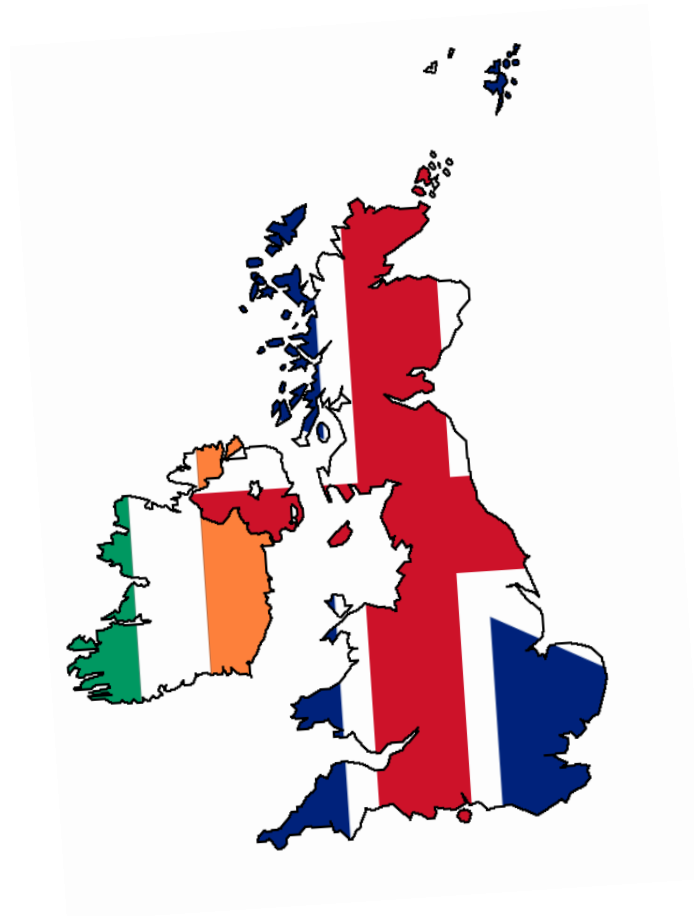
Individuals asked if they would purchase a food containing their the allergen(s) if they could be assured that the amount of that allergen present in the food would not be capable of triggering an allergic reaction



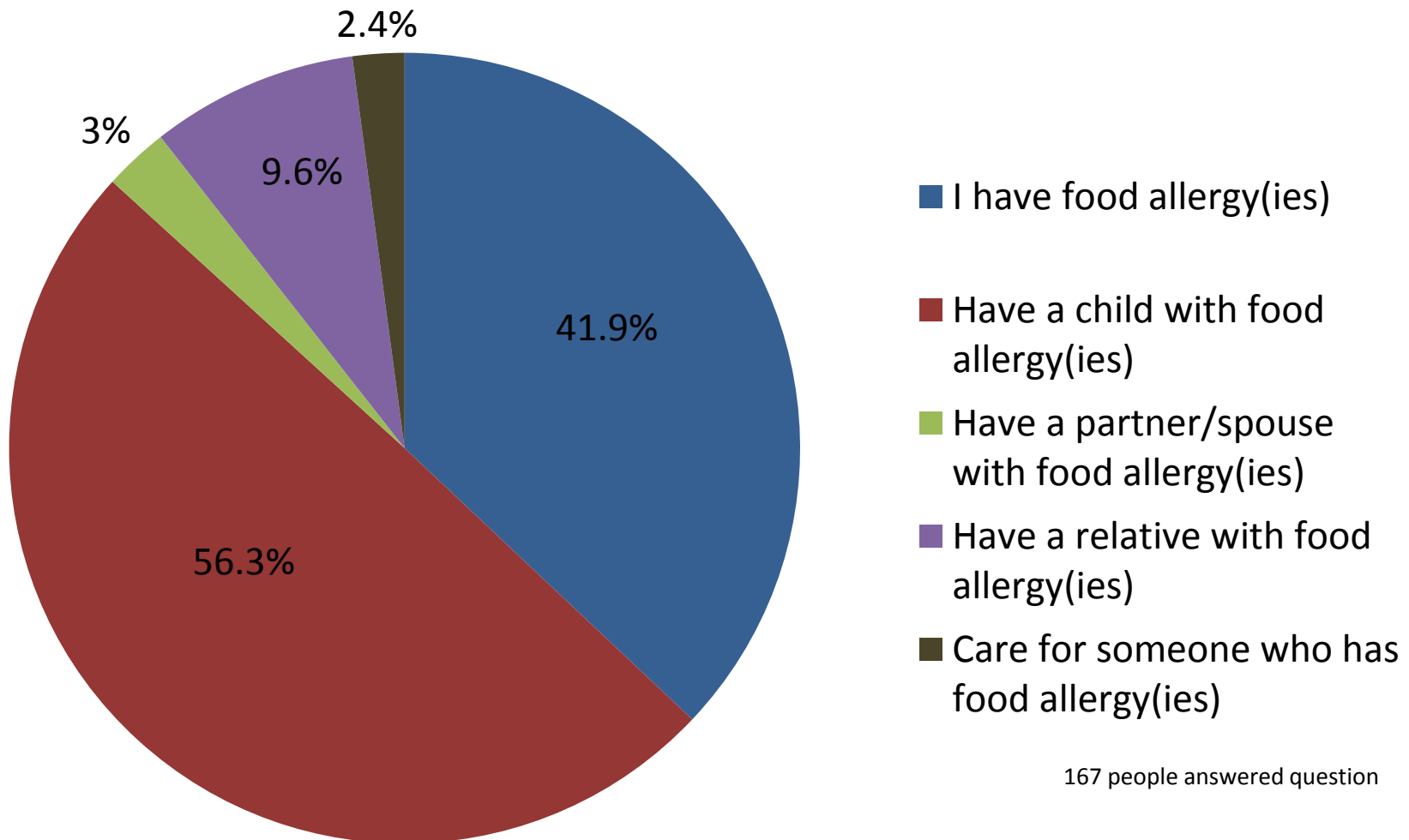
Individuals asked if they would purchase a food containing their allergen(s) if they could be assured that the amount of that allergen present in the food would only be capable of triggering a mild allergic reaction (e.g. tingly lips or an itchy throat)



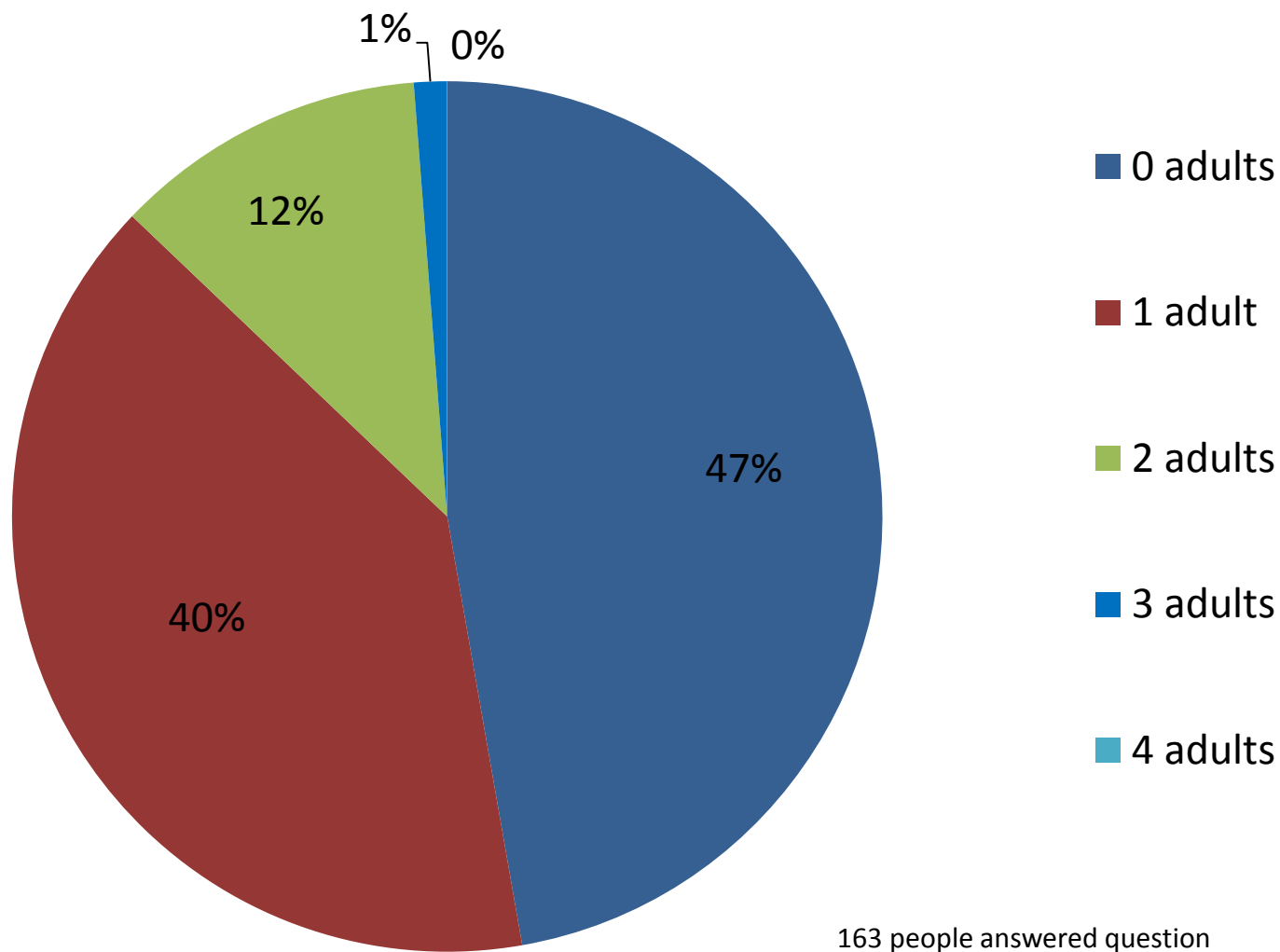
UK Survey Results



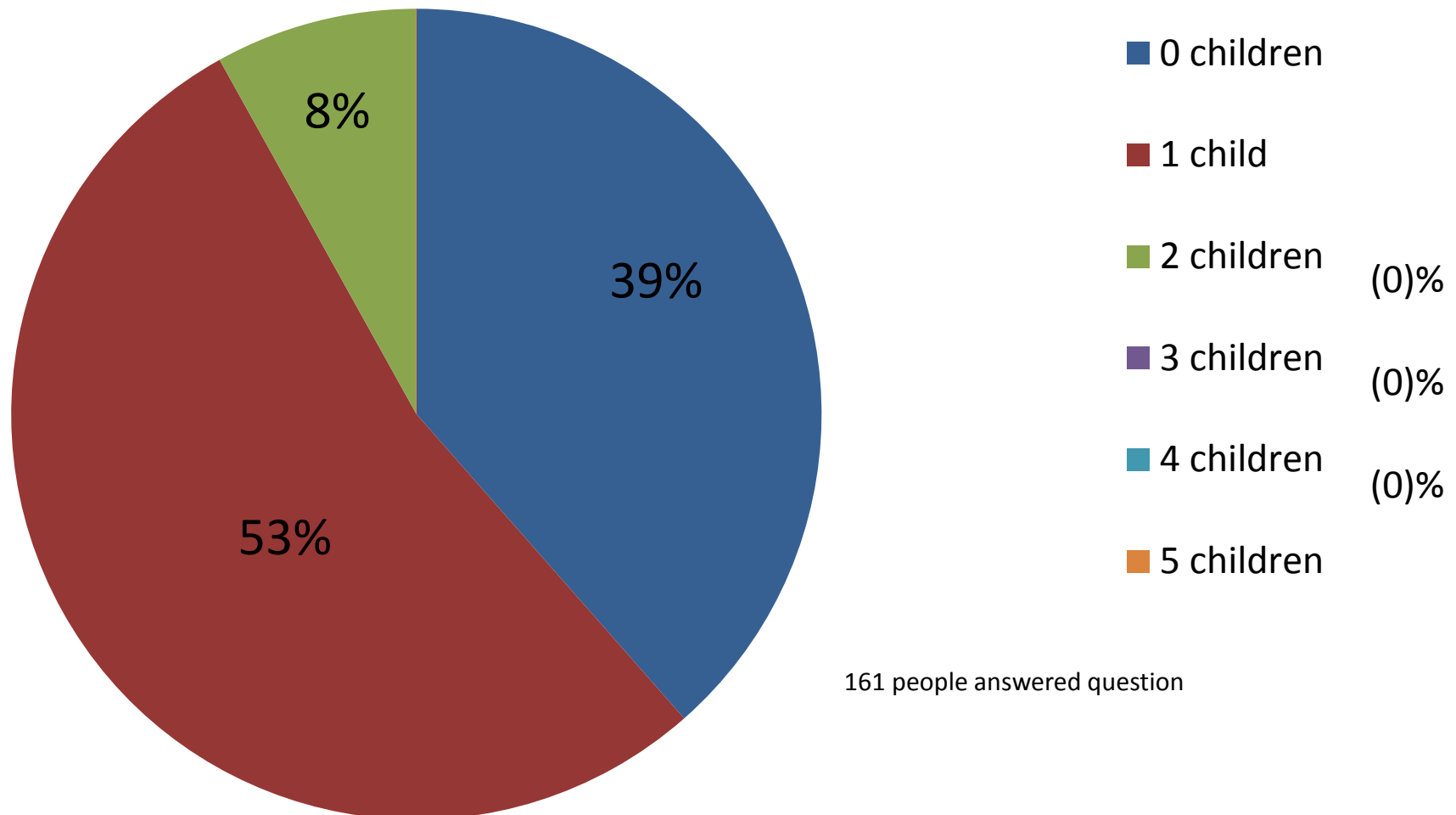
Who has the allergy(ies)?



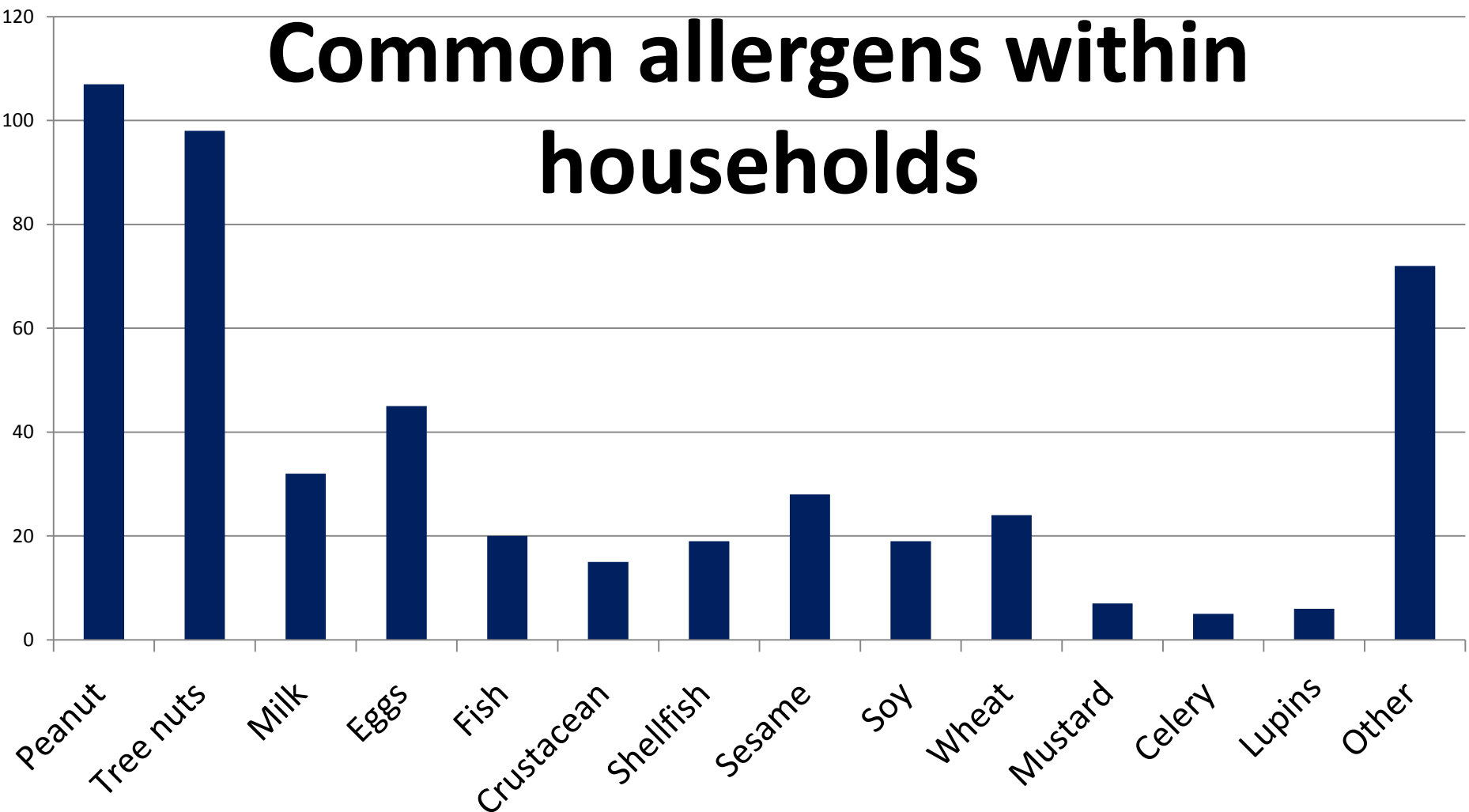
How many adults in the household have food allergies?



How many children (i.e. up to 18 yrs) in your household have food allergies?



Common allergens within households

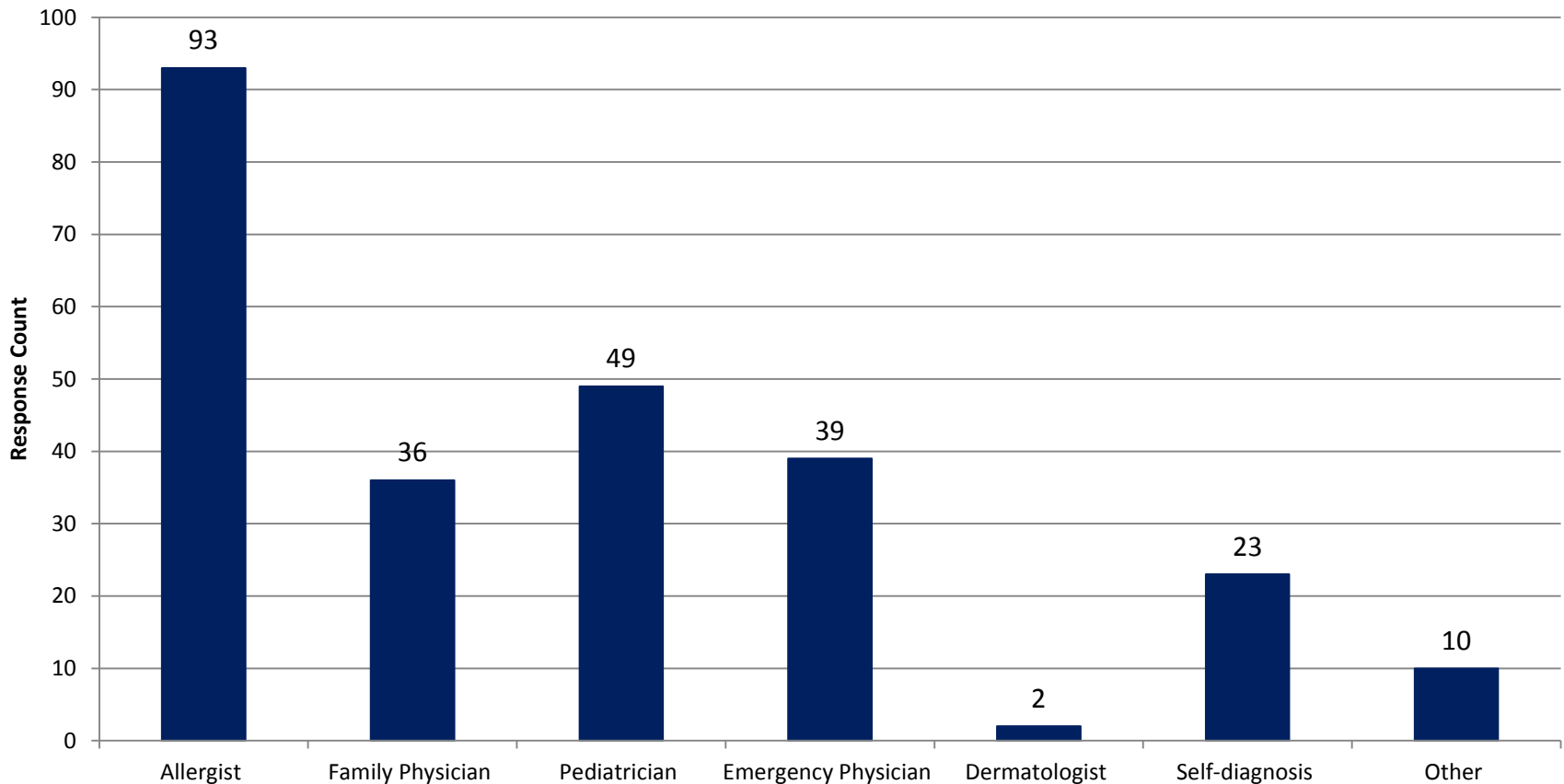


166 people answered question

Other food allergies identified

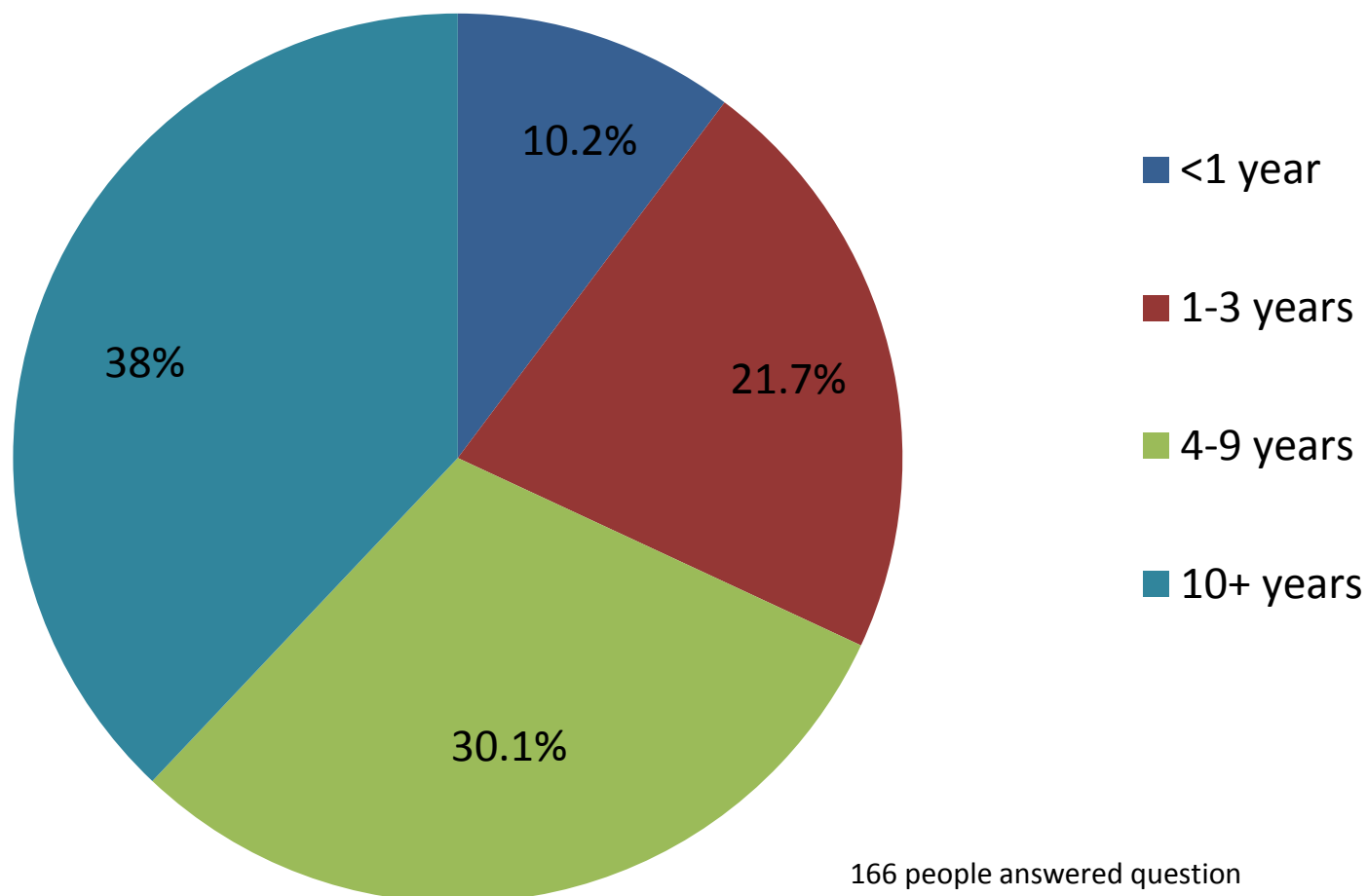
- Kiwi
- Lentils
- Barley & Pulses
- Tomato
- Potato
- Banana
- Cucumber
- Strawberries
- Oats
- Sulphites
- Chillies
- Apples
- Alcohol
- Grapes
- Peppers
- Parsnip
- Pomegranate
- Orange
- Food colouring
- Avocado
- Chickpeas
- Seeds
- Garlic
- Bean sprouts
- Carrots
- Yeast
- Coconut
- Pineapple

Who diagnosed the food allergy(ies)?

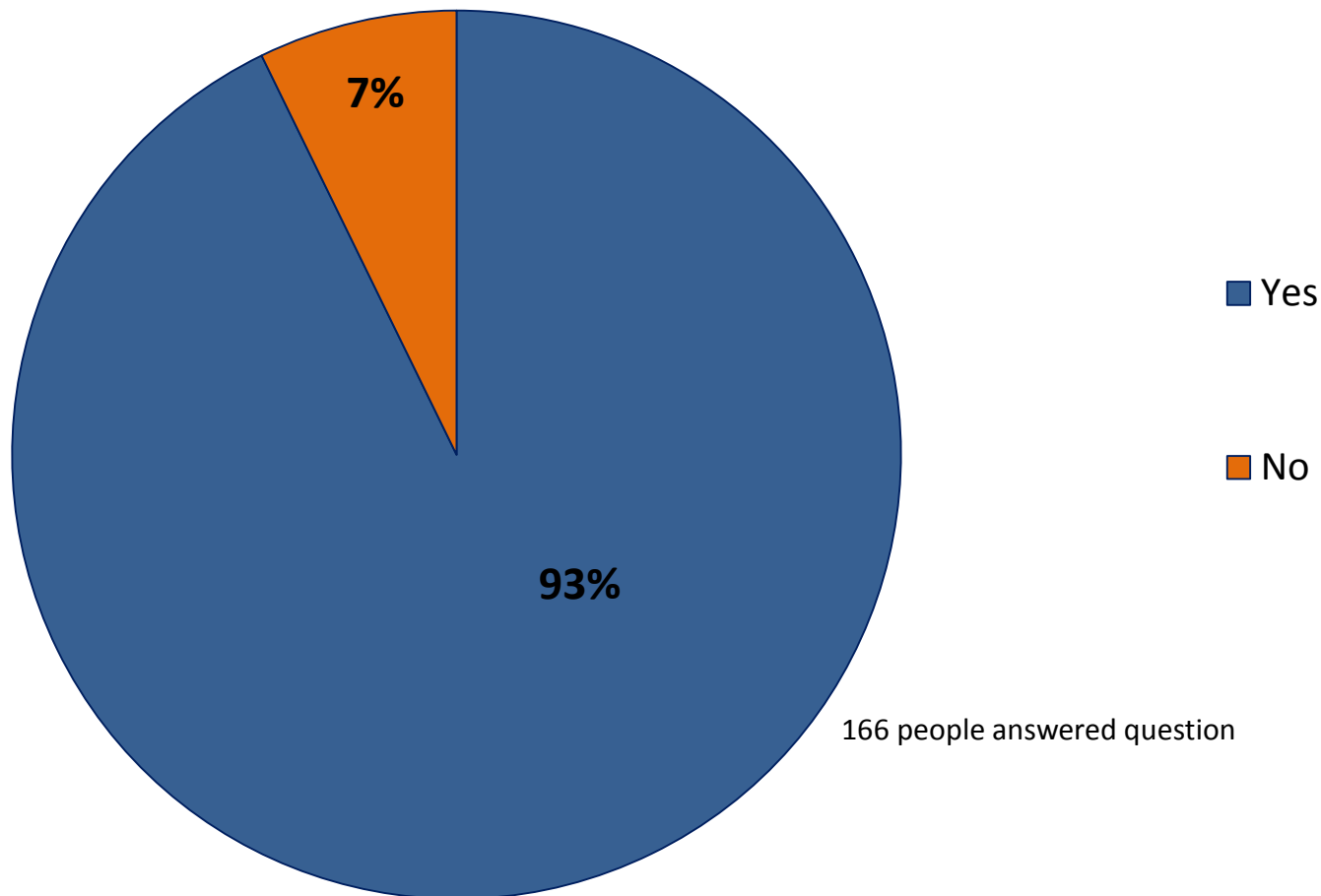


166 people answered question

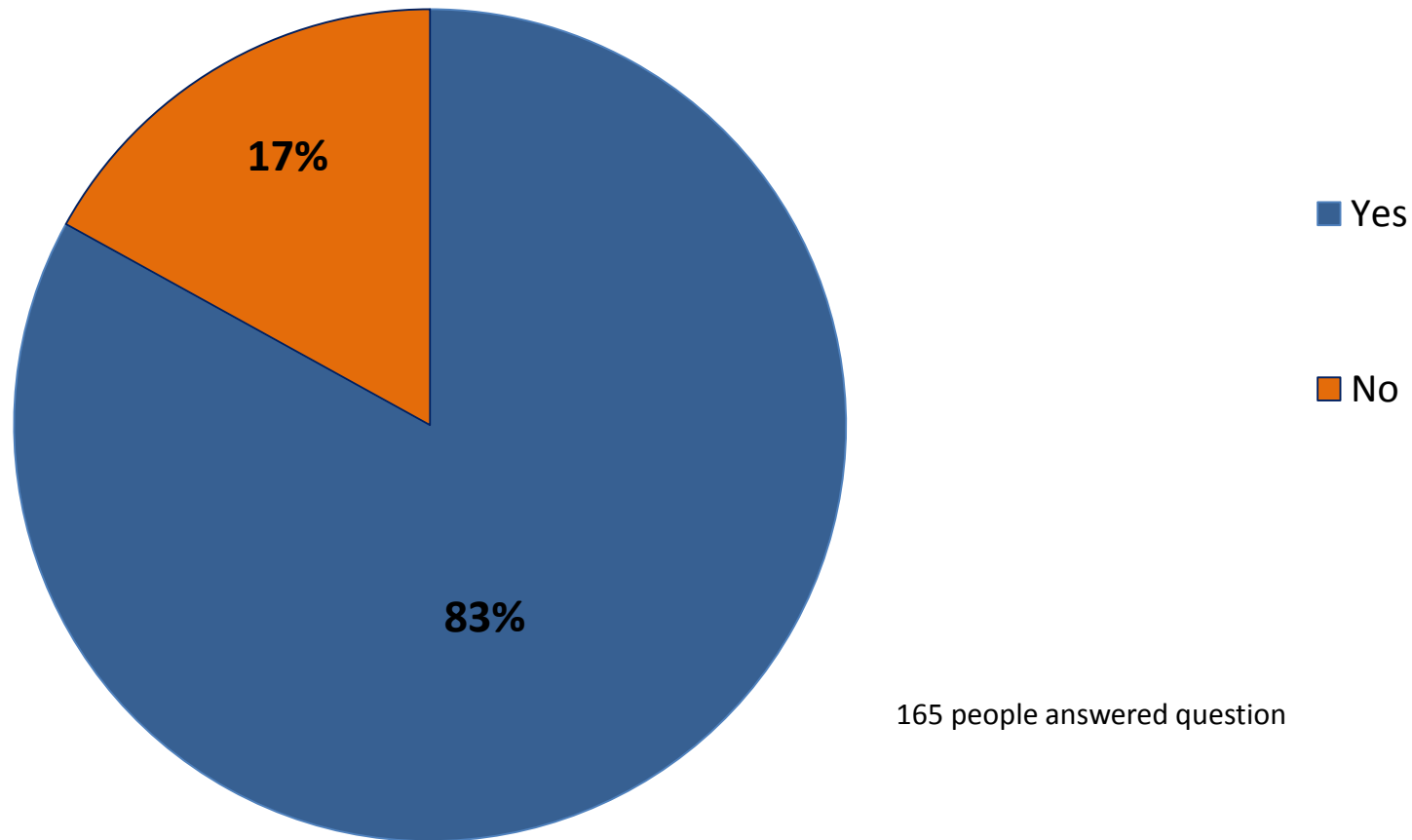
How long ago was the diagnosis of the food allergy?



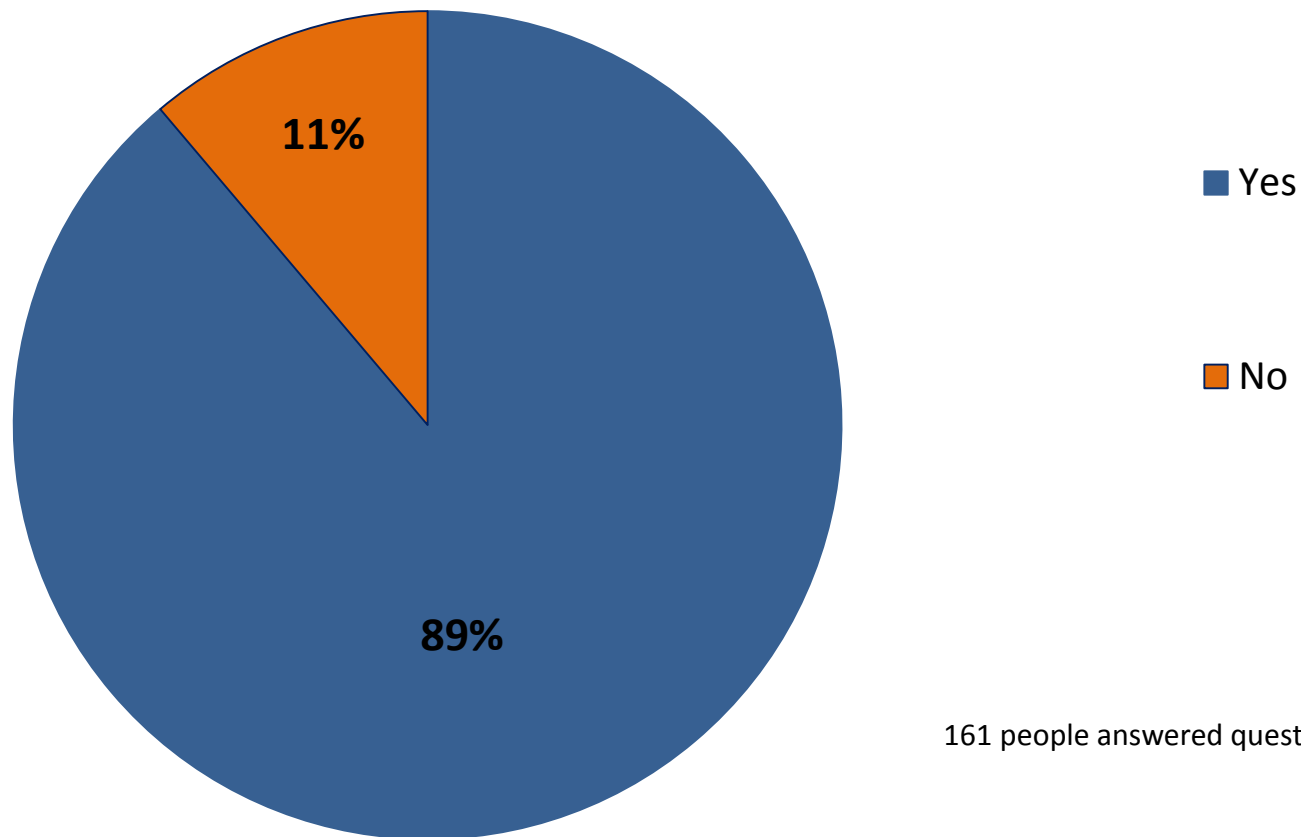
Has anyone in the household ever experienced an allergic reaction to a food?



Has anyone in the household
ever experienced a severe food allergy
reaction (e.g. Anaphylaxis)

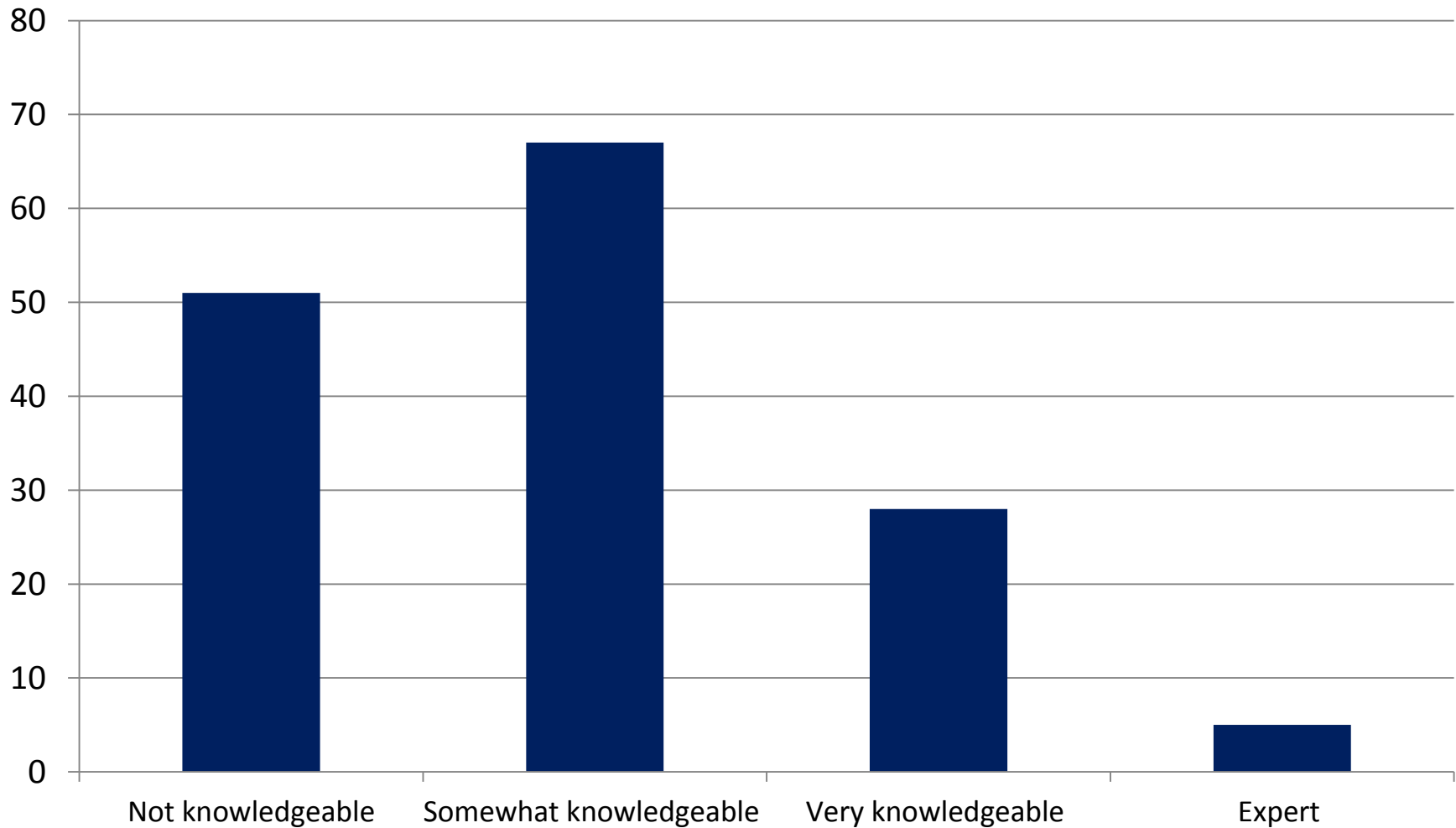


Do you purchase pre-cooked or processed food, such as biscuits, breads, canned goods, sweets, cereals, etc?



161 people answered question

How knowledgeable do you think you are about allergen thresholds?



151 people answered question.

Based on what you know about, how do you feel about thresholds?

“Not good, I think every individual reacts different, you can't set a threshold for all”

“If someone has an anaphylactic allergy then I would believe the ‘threshold’ would be zero!”

“I would like it to be more clear”

“Not enough to comment, we have been advised to avoid any allergens so that's what we do”

“I find them extremely confusing! I need to know what they mean for us everyone's allergies are different.”

“Don't know enough about them and not willing to take the risk with my children but may do as they get older”

Percentage of individuals who stated they would 'Never' purchase a product with these statements



- Contains: **98%**
- Not suitable for allergen (e.g. nut) allergy sufferers: **81%**
- Manufactured on the same equipment as products containing allergen: **75%**
- May contain: **70%**
- Manufactured in a facility that also processes allergen: **53%**
- Packaged in a facility that also packages products containing allergen: **51%**
- Good manufacturing practices used to segregate ingredients in a facility that also processes allergen: **17%**

Consumers interpret meaning and risk based on statement.

Percentage of individuals who stated they would 'Always' purchase a product with these statement

Majority, not all, would purchase:

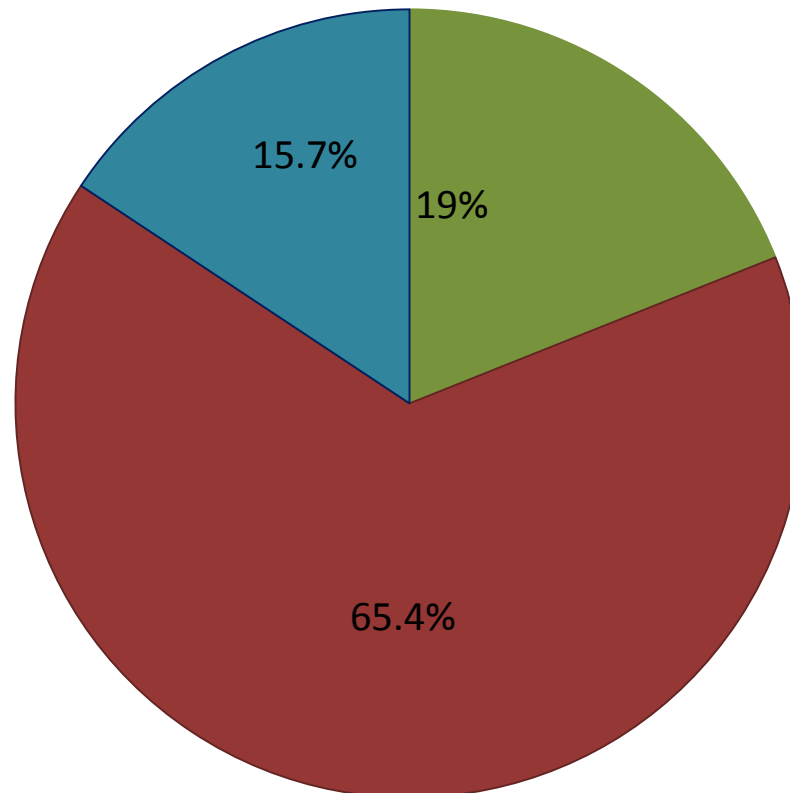
- Free From Allergen: **87%**
- Allergen Free: **86%**
- No consistent standards in place for 'free from' claims as not regulated



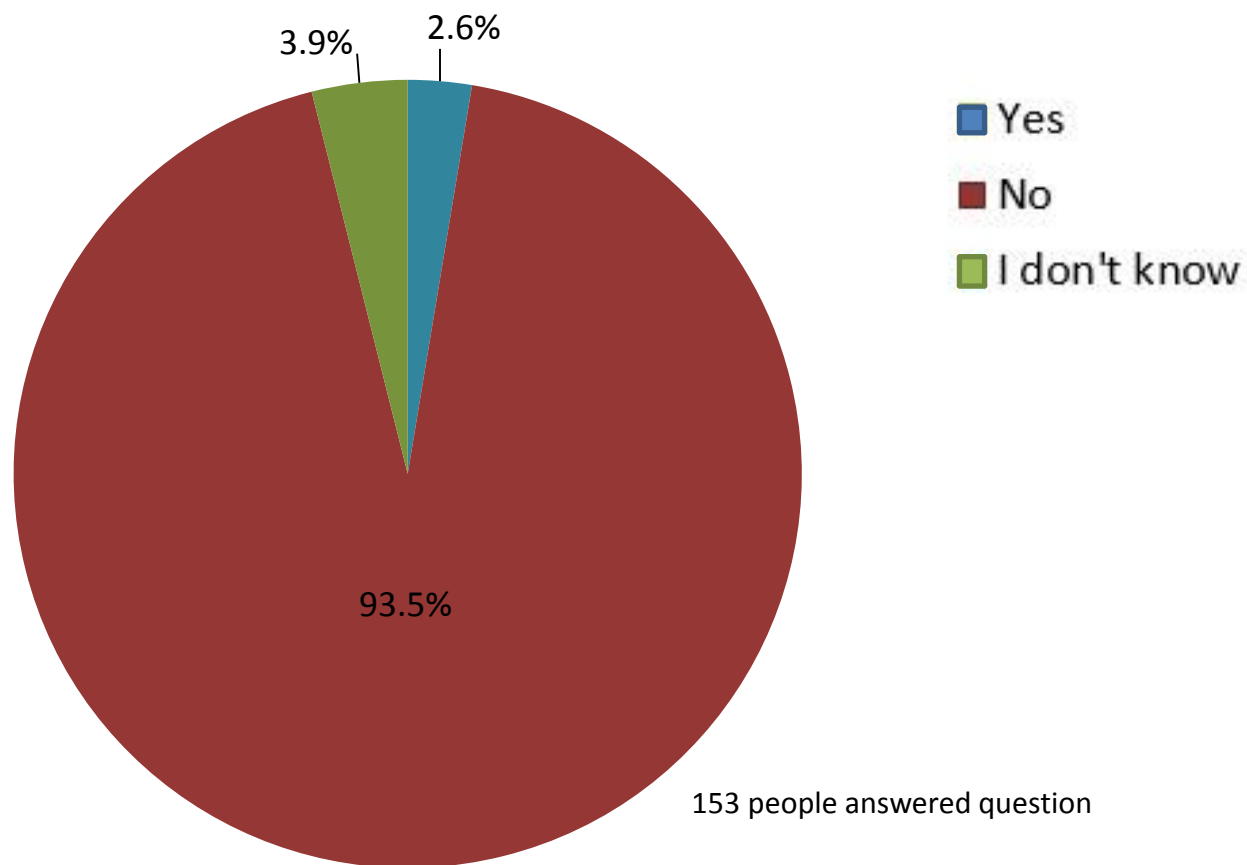
Would you purchase a food that contains the allergen(s) you are avoiding if you could be assured that the amount of that allergen present in the food is not capable of triggering an allergic reaction?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

153 people answered question



Would you purchase a food that contains the allergen(s) you are avoiding if you could be assured that the amount of that allergen present in the food is only capable of triggering a mild allergic reaction, such as tingly lips or an itchy throat?



Consumer Perspective of Thresholds

Most consumers are finding it difficult to understand 'threshold':

- Common advice is to avoid allergenic foods
- *How much is too much? (Unknown)*
- Threshold concept creates confusion and concern – which are reflected in responses and comments
- Consumers admit that they are not knowledgeable about this area

Consumer Perspectives of Thresholds

- Majority of responders are not comfortable with thresholds.
- They need more information, presented in a language they can understand, and want to be able to make informed decisions
- Most people would like to see:
 - Clearer and consistent labelling (standardized)
 - Labels they can trust

Food labelling

- Variation in precautionary statements: Some with, others without
- Frustration amongst consumers with too many “may contain” type statements
- Choices are restricted – many ignore precautionary warnings

View of the Anaphylaxis Campaign

- Consistent risk management approaches using agreed action levels based on good science will provide optimal protection to allergic consumers
- Increasing information ,including that drawn from conducting oral food challenges, offer a realistic possibility of agreement among stakeholders in the future
- A massive communications exercise is required with consumers, clinicians and the food industry if thresholds are to be successfully implemented

Communication challenges for patients, carers and health care professionals

- The need to convey that zero risk is not achievable
- The possible effect of extrinsic factors on threshold levels
 - asthma
 - exercise
 - medications such as NSAID,
 - alcohol



Any questions?

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