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Subject: Chrysanthemum contact hypersensitivity.

We all know florists who have had to stop work during November and December because of chrysanthemum contact dermatitis. Recent progress in cultivating flowers has made chrysanthemum available all the year round. This could entail a full invalidation of the sensitized florists instead of a partial and temporary one (1/6). We tested such a florist with 15 chrysanthemums he brought from his greenhouse in October. He showed positive contactallergic reactions to only 5 of them (leaves and petals tested separately). We advised him to culture only the negative reacting 10 species and to be extremely careful in touching even these. Another florist reacted to only 4 of the 12 specimens (leaves and petals tested together) in November. By purposeful crossing new varieties are grown. Sometimes spontaneous mutations occur. Good specimens from both origins are taken up in floriculture programs. They are named: cultivars (abbreviated C.V.). Some 500 are known and named. Every year a number of them are replaced by newly developed, better ones. All-the-year-round-chrysanthemums belong to only 5 main varieties, three quarters belong only to 2 main varieties. Some specimens may contain a lesser amount of allergen than others. This also may be influenced by season and manner of cultivation. Similar phenomena are known from Daffodils, Tulips and Primulas. A nice subject for a thesis (see Verspijck Mijnsen, Brit. J. Derm. 81 (1969) 757).

Pos. reacting Chrys. Cultivars

Patient 1

Criterion Dark violet-lilac

Gompie

Clarette (white)

Rebeta

Roodkapje (redcap)

Patient 2

Long Island

Paris yellow

White Spider

Bunny

Neg. reacting Chrys. Cultivars

Red Rolinda

Juweeltje extra violet (little jewel)

Golden seal

Gigoletta (white)

Juweeltje extra red

Gigoletta (yellow)

Skippy

Lucida

Koens elite red

Koens elite dark

Rolanda

Paris wine red

Bunki

My Lord

Orchid Beauty

Orange wonder

Ramona

Golden seal

Discerning the sensitizers from the non noxious specimens would not only help some florists, but also might have implications for the health of the public in the future.