Abstract:
The role of IgE-mediated allergic reactions in atopic eczema remains controversial. Using the atopy patch test, aeroallergens such as house dust mites, animal dander or pollen can be identified as relevant trigger factors in a subgroup of patients with atopic eczema. The atopy patch test is an epicutaneous patch test employing allergens known to elicit IgE-mediated reactions and used to evaluate eczematous skin reactions. In a series of single- and multicenter studies, a method was developed, standardized and compared to other diagnostic techniques (specific serum-IgE, skin prick test) in atopic eczema patients. With regard to clinical history, the most specific results were obtained with the atopy patch test (allergen-dependent 69-92%), while sensitivity was higher for skin prick test (69-82%) and specific IgE (65-94%). The characterization of a patient subgroup with relevant IgE-mediated allergy may lead to more efficient avoidance and perhaps even specific immunotherapy strategies in the management of atopic eczema.