

Diagnosing/Treating Your Child's Food Allergies



It is estimated that 2-5% of children have one or more food allergies.

The most common food allergies are to milk, soy, egg, wheat, peanut, tree nuts, fish, shellfish and sesame.

Fast Onset/Immediate Symptoms				Chronic Symptoms
Respiratory	Skin	Gastro-Intestinal	Cardiovascular	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runny nose • Sneezing • Wheezing • Hoarseness • Chest tightness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hives • Eczema • Flushing • Swelling of lips and eyelids • Itching or other rashes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nausea • Vomiting • Diarrhea • Abdominal Pain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dizziness • Pale Skin • Fainting • Low Blood Pressure • Slow or Rapid Pulse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eczema • Poor Appetite or Weight Gain • Blood In Stool
<p>Anaphylactic Shock is a life threatening combination of the above fast onset symptoms.</p>				

Testing for Food Allergies

There are two ways to test for food allergies: skin testing and blood testing. Both can have false negative or false positive results, so they must be very carefully interpreted by an allergist who is experienced in the management of food allergy.

Blood testing: A blood sample is taken and used to measure allergic antibodies against specific foods.

Skin testing: Purified extracts of specific foods are placed on the skin with a "scratch". This method is virtually painless and can be performed on children as young as 4 months.

Treatment

Avoidance of the allergenic foods is the necessary way to minimize the chances of a reaction. Food allergy reactions can be life-threatening, so children with allergies should have a medicine called epinephrine available at all times for emergency treatment of severe reactions.

If you think that your child has food allergy, make an appointment with one of our board-certified allergists. We're in your neighborhood.



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