

FOOD ALLERGIES AWARENESS MONTH

In the US, every year 200,000 people require emergency medical care for allergic reactions to food.

15 MILLION

Americans have food allergy,
a serious medical condition.



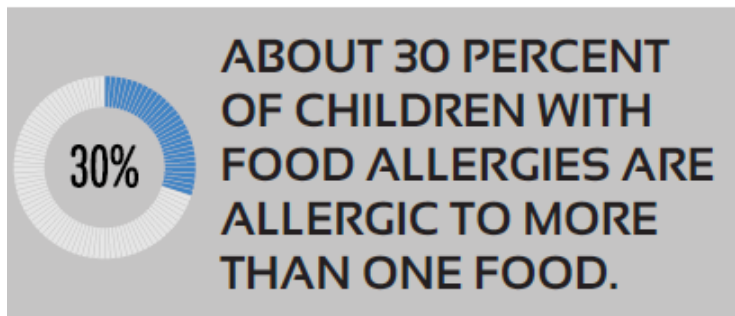
WHAT IS A FOOD ALLERGY?

A food allergy is a medical condition in which exposure to a food triggers a harmful immune response. The immune response, called an allergic reaction, occurs because the immune system attacks proteins in the food that are normally harmless. The proteins that trigger the reaction are called allergens.

The symptoms of an allergic reaction to food can range from mild (itchy mouth, a few hives) to severe (throat tightening, difficulty breathing).

More than 170 foods have been reported to cause allergic reactions.

There's A Difference Between Intolerances and Allergies. Having an Allergy is much different than having an intolerance. Both are irritating and upsetting to deal with, but they affect two completely different parts of the body. Allergies deal with your immune system where your body is reacting to the protein in the food you're eating. With intolerance, the response is not from your immune system, rather, from your digestive system.



Intolerances Generally Are Not Life Threatening Food Intolerances must be differentiated from allergic reactions because they have two very different outcomes. If you are talking to someone with an intolerance, there is less of a worry than if they have a serious allergy. Food intolerances may cause serious discomfort, but are not life threatening. However, allergic reactions can be extremely serious and may be life threatening.

Food Allergies Means You CANNOT Have That Food, Ever When prepping food for those with serious allergies, the best thing you can do is wipe down your counters with a fresh dishcloth, wash all equipment you will use to make the food ahead of time and do not buy the ingredients from the bulk food section in your food store. This will help prevent your cooking and baking from having issues of cross contamination.

Can Food Allergies Be Outgrown?

- Although allergies to milk, egg, wheat and soy often resolve in childhood, children appear to be outgrowing some of these allergies more slowly than in previous decades, with many children still allergic beyond age 5.
- Allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, fish and shellfish are generally lifelong.



Milk



Eggs



Peanut



Tree Nuts



Soy



Wheat



Fish

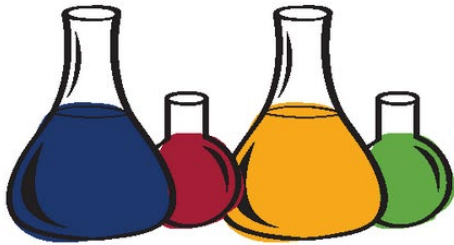


Shellfish

If you have a food allergy, blame your parents. It's an inherited predisposition. In other words, if your family has a history of allergies, you are much more likely than, say, the child of allergy-free parents to develop a food allergy.

Is There a Cure?

- There is no cure for food allergy. Food allergies are managed by avoiding the problem food(s) and learning to recognize and treat reactions symptoms.
- Food allergy therapies are under study in clinical trials, but none has been proven yet for general use.



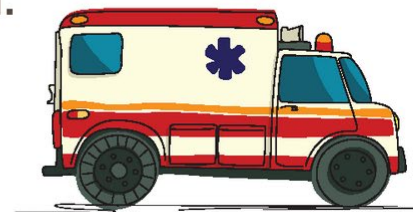
There is no cure for food allergy, but scientists are working to find treatments to prevent life-threatening reactions.

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ONCE A SERIOUS ALLERGIC REACTION (ANAPHYLAXIS) STARTS, THE DRUG EPINEPHRINE IS THE ONLY EFFECTIVE TREATMENT.

Reactions can range from a mild response to **anaphylaxis**, a severe and potentially deadly reaction.

Every 3 minutes a food allergy reaction sends someone to the **ER.**



The development of a food allergy begins with one simple step: Exposure to the food. If you never touch or eat a peanut, you'll never develop a peanut allergy. Even that first peanut butter biscuit may be innocuous, but as you digest it, it

triggers your immune system to produce IgE antibodies that will be activated the next time you eat the food.

It's not the food that triggers the reaction but rather proteins within the food that are not broken down through cooking or by stomach acid or digestive enzymes. These proteins are absorbed through the gastrointestinal lining into your bloodstream then travel through your body.



You Can Work To Figure Out Your Own Food Intolerance If you suspect that your body has a food intolerance, the best thing to do is to keep a food journal where you record all of the foods you consume throughout the day, as well as how you feel after eating. Elimination diets that remove a food from your diet are common when trying to determine a digestive issue.

Resources:

<https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/food-allergy-101/facts-and-statistics>

<https://www.forkly.com/food/20-facts-about-food-allergies-intolerances-you-need-to-know/>

<https://www.foodallergyawareness.org/food-allergy-and-anaphylaxis/>

<http://www.kidswithfoodallergies.org/page/faces-of-food-allergies.aspx>

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