

GET MORE TIPS AND INFORMATION

If you would like additional information, visit us at our Patient Information Portal.



Here you will find, among other things, a practical allergy journal or an overview of cross-reactive allergens.
(Note: Website in German)

www.allergie-freizeit.de

The website has been awarded with the "MeinAllergiePortal Digital Health Heroes Award 2018".

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KNOW YOUR TREATMENT OPTIONS

Avoiding the allergens is the safest measure when suffering from food allergy. But this does not mean - at least in case of a pollen associated food allergy (oral allergy syndrome) - that the triggering foods always have to be avoided completely.

Allergy sufferers often report that the symptoms are much weaker outside of the pollen season, or that they disappear all together.

Other circumstances, such as physical exertion, can exacerbate symptoms. Many foods that bear similarities to pollen (e.g. nuts, fruit, vegetables) are also sensitive to heat so that it is possible to eat sufficiently heated foods without a problem.

Patients who have had severe allergic reactions to food allergens (breathing or circulatory problems) should keep an emergency kit with them, just in case. Generally these are prescribed by an allergist and contain an antihistamine, a corticosteroid (cortisone) and an adrenaline auto-injector.

GETTING THROUGH THE DAY BETTER

Aside from avoiding allergy triggering foods, the following suggestions can help you control a food allergy.

EVERYDAY TIPS



Read the ingredient lists on food products carefully. It can be surprising how often foods contain traces of allergens (e.g. nuts).



Ask your allergist or nutritionist specializing in allergies how to interpret ingredient lists and warning labels on food packages properly.



If you have an allergic reaction to fruit, heat it before eating. Some allergens can be destroyed this way, which can make the fruit more tolerable for you.



For people with food allergies, it can often be difficult to identify the trigger. Keeping an allergy journal can help.



Ask your doctor whether you should keep an emergency kit with you.

What, when
and how in case
of allergies

FOOD ALLERGY

Explanation, Therapy, Tips for You



The word allergy essentially means „foreign reaction“. This fairly accurately describes what happens in your body in case of an allergy. An allergy is nothing more than an exaggerated defense reaction of the immune system to certain, normally harmless environmental substances. These substances are called allergens.

In the case of a food allergy, certain foods trigger this hypersensitivity of the immune system. In Germany around 20% of the population suffers from a food allergy. Cow's milk and peanut allergies make up around two thirds of all cases. They are caused by certain antibodies, the immunoglobulin E (IgE). The other third suffer from food allergies not triggered by IgE, including gluten intolerance (celiac disease), for example. Allergists also distinguish between primary and secondary food allergies.

WHAT ARE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY FOOD ALLERGIES?

Primary food allergies usually first appear during childhood. Experts suspect these may be caused by early sensitization through the digestive tract, e. g. by consuming milk or chicken protein.

The symptoms appear shortly after consumption (2 hours at most). They may even be life-threatening, a condition known as anaphylaxis. In fact, around a third of all cases of anaphylaxis treated in emergency rooms are the result of food allergies. In cases involving children, the proportion increases to 80%.

WHAT ARE SECONDARY FOOD ALLERGIES?

So-called secondary food allergies account for up to 60% of all food allergies. In such cases, there is an underlying allergy to pollen or dust mites. Some elements in foods are similar to these allergens and may trigger allergic reactions. Because of the frequency of this similarity to pollen, such reactions are known as pollen associated food allergies.

Because pollen allergies are occurring more and more often, it is plausible that the associated food allergies will also become more common. The severity of the pollen allergy, however, appears to have no influence on the severity of the pollen associated food allergy. This may develop years after the pollen allergy began.

Particularly common allergens include stone fruits and certain types of vegetables (e.g. carrots or celery) or other fruits which contain allergens similar to tree pollen.

FOOD SENSITIVITY DUE TO CROSS-REACTIONS

SORTED BY DECREASING FREQUENCY

INHALED ALLERGENS	FOOD ALLERGENS
Tree pollen (e. G. birch)	apple, hazelnut, carrot, potato, cherry, green kiwi, nectarine, peach, apricot, plum, celery, soy, fig
Mugwort pollen	spices, carrot, mango, celery, sunflower seeds
Natural latex	pineapple, avocado, banana, potato, kiwi, tomato, chestnut, peach, mango, papaya, acerola-cherry, celery
Birch fig	fig, kiwi, banana, papaya, pineapple, avocado
Bird feathers	egg, poultry, gible
Dust mites	shellfish and molluscs
Animal epithelia	meat

THE POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS OF FOOD ALLERGIES



NOSE

Allergic sniff rhinitis with itching and congestion



EYES

Itchy eyes, redness, runny eyes, swelling



LUNGS

Allergic asthma with dry cough and shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, wheezing breath sounds, lack of oxygen, difficulty breathing



SKIN

Rash, hives with wheals, redness, itching, swelling



MOUTH

Swelling of the lips, tongue, gums and/or larynx, itching of the mouth and throat



STOMACH/INTESTINE

Nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhea, heartburn



WELL-BEING

Shock, drop in blood pressure, elevated pulse, drowsiness, dizziness, brief unconsciousness

ALLERGIC REACTIONS TO FOOD

The foods that most frequently trigger allergic reactions include peanuts, tree nuts, soy, fish and crustaceans, cow's milk, celery and chicken eggs. Allergies to cow's milk or chicken eggs may diminish over time as children grow up. In some cases, they may in fact be able to consume the foods after a few years. However, allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, fish and crustaceans (mussel, snails) are usually life-long.

IMPORTANT SOURCES OF FOOD ALLERGENS

CHILDREN	ADOLESCENTS AND ADULTS
cow's milk, chicken egg, peanut, wheat, soy, nuts, fish	Pollen-associated food allergens (e.g. apple, nuts, soy, celery, carrot, paprika, spices), nuts and oilseeds (e.g. sesame seeds), peanuts, fish and crustaceans, cow's milk, chicken eggs, latex associated food allergens



In order to find out which foods triggers allergic reactions, it is helpful to keep a nutrition and complaint diary. Such an allergy diary (in German) can also be found at www.allergie-freizeit.de.