

Food Allergies and Intolerance in Children

My child has a reaction to milk. Is she allergic to milk?

Maybe. The difference between a food allergy and food intolerance is important, because food allergies can cause life-threatening problems. Roughly 3%-8% of children have reactions to some foods, but only 1%-2% of those reactions are true food allergies. Sorting out if your child has an allergy or an intolerance is important in learning how to manage your child's reaction to milk.

What is a food allergy?

A food allergy is an immune response triggered by a specific food. Food allergies range from mild to severe. The most common food allergies are peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, fish, eggs, soy, wheat, and dairy foods.

Food allergy symptoms:

- Mild – hives, swelling, and itching of the lips or mouth
- Moderate – nausea, diarrhea, vomiting
- Severe – anaphylaxis may occur, resulting in wheezing, difficulty breathing, rapid pulse, and passing out; if left untreated, death can result

What is a food intolerance?

A food intolerance is less serious than an allergy. People with intolerances can't easily tolerate or digest a food. Many different foods can cause a food intolerance, including dairy foods such as milk and cheese, which is known as lactose intolerance.

Food intolerance symptoms are similar to mild or moderate allergy symptoms, but will not cause anaphylaxis. While food intolerances are sometimes uncomfortable, they are not life-threatening. For this reason, if someone has a food intolerance, he/she can often eat small amounts of the food without experiencing a reaction.

Why does it matter if it is an allergy or an intolerance?

If your child has a food allergy, he/she will need to avoid that food, especially if the allergy is severe. However, if it is a food intolerance, your child can possibly eat the food in small amounts or in different forms. Many lactose intolerant individuals experience no symptoms when they eat cheese or yogurt rather than drinking a glass of milk. It is important to know the difference, so you don't unnecessarily eliminate foods from your child's diet.

How do I know if my child has a true food allergy?

The best way to know if your child has an allergy is to visit an allergist. Allergy testing can include a blood test (called a RAST test) or prick skin test. A prick skin test is where the doctor places a drop of the suspected allergen on the skin, and then your child is monitored for a reaction.

Play Up The Produce Get Snacking!

VEGGIES

- veggie kabobs
- baby carrots
- celery sticks
- sweet pepper slices
- cherry tomatoes
- cucumber coins
- grape tomatoes
- any favorite veggie!

FRUIT

- any sliced fruit for dipping in low fat vanilla or lemon yogurt
- single serve cups of fruit or applesauce
- fruit kabobs
- grapes
- kiwifruit (cut in half and pack with a spoon)
- any favorite fruit

You Are What You Eat

Eating out is very common with today's on-the-go lifestyle. To help you eat better, featured below are healthier choices on the McAlister's Deli® menu.

Try to select some of these healthier options for your entree:

Red Beans & Rice

107 calories 3 g fat 11 g fiber 760 mg sodium

Vegetarian Chili

133 calories 1 g fat 15 g fiber 594 mg sodium

Deli Roast Beef on Wheat

398 calories 12 g fat 5 g fiber 1937 mg sodium

Sweetberry Chicken on Wheatberry

701 calories 24 g fat 5 g fiber 1618 mg sodium

Get Moving!

(Family-Friendly Activities)

Spring Nature Fair

Date: Saturday, May 3

Time: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Location: McCloud Nature Park

Cost: FREE

Join us on Saturday, May 3rd to celebrate the park's five-year anniversary and welcome spring with activities, live animal demonstrations and exhibits.

Contact: Hendricks County Parks & Recreation, 718-6188, www.hendrickscountyparks.org

YMCA Parents Night Out

Date: Friday, May 9

Time: 6:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.

Location: West District YMCA Office

Cost: \$15 per child / \$8 each additional sibling

Enjoy an evening out while the YMCA staff and volunteers entertain your kids. Parents Night out is for ages 3 to 12 (child must be potty trained).

Contact: West District YMCA, 484-9622

Danville Geranium Festival

Date: Saturday, May 17

Time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Location: Downtown Danville

Cost: FREE

4-H clubs from the area will be selling the Danville town flower, the Geranium. Booths will display art, plants and gardening materials. This event is also the kick-off for the Danville Farmer's Market season.

Contact: Danville Chamber, 745-0670

Kids Garage Sale

Date: Saturday, May 31

Time: 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Location: Brownsburg Community Center

Cost: \$5 per space reservation, FREE for shoppers

Kids – have some old toys to sell so you can buy new ones? Mom and Dad – want to get some old kids' clothes off your hands? Reserve a space and bring the family to a garage sale kids style. Encourage your kids to run the space and with your help, they'll have fun, learn responsibility and money handling.

Contact: Brownsburg Parks and Recreation Department, 852-0595

(from front page)

Can my child outgrow of a food allergy?

Yes. Children often outgrow allergies to milk, eggs, wheat, and soy, often by the time they are 5 years old. However, allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, and shellfish tend to be lifelong. Allergy testing when your child is young and repeat testing later in life can show whether your child has outgrown the allergy.

What is the treatment for a food allergy?

The best treatment is to avoid the food that causes an allergic reaction. In the case of anaphylaxis, treatment with an injectable epinephrine will help manage allergy symptoms. In the case of hives, creams or antihistamines may help with itching.

How can I make sure that my child doesn't eat anything he is allergic to?

Reading food labels and asking questions is an important part of living with severe food allergies. Many foods such as milk, soy, and peanuts are used in packaged and processed foods, and are listed on the ingredient list on the Nutrition Facts label. When eating out, always ask how foods are prepared, so you know that your child will not get the wrong food by mistake. A registered dietitian skilled in managing food allergies can help you learn what foods to avoid in order to prevent allergic reactions. For more information, call the Hendricks Regional Health dietetics department at 745-3769.

For additional information, visit:

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, www.aafa.org

Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network, www.foodallergy.org

MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia, www.nlm.nih.gov

Need a pediatrician? Call the physician referral line at 745-DOCS.

Garbage Pasta Salad

Ingredients:

8 oz. rotini pasta	6 oz. turkey salami or baked ham, cubed
1 small zucchini, thinly sliced	1 cup pea pods
1 cup chopped broccoli flowerets	1 cup sweet red pepper, chopped
1/2 small red onion, thinly sliced	1/2 cup light Italian dressing
2 Tbs. grated Parmesan cheese	Black pepper, to taste
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh parsley or basil (or a mix of both)	

Directions:

Boil the pasta according to directions; rinse in cold water and drain. Pour the drained, cool pasta into a large bowl. Toss on top of the pasta the salami, cheese, zucchini, pea pods, broccoli, red pepper, onion, parsley or basil and dressing. Stir well. Serve with Parmesan cheese sprinkled on top and black pepper, to taste. Enjoy right away or cover and chill overnight.

230 calories	9 g fat	2 g fiber	23 g carbohydrates
30 mg cholesterol	470 mg sodium	14 g protein	

Recipe from www.kidnetic.com



www.hendricksregional.org

To subscribe, e-mail...healthykids@hendricksregional.org