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The Children's Asthma and Allergy Network
@ The Children's Medical Institute

WHAT DO I DO IF I THINK MY CHILD HAS A FOOD ALLERGY?

If a reaction is clearly linked to exposure to particular foods and especially if it was severe, you should consult a doctor. In the meantime, your child should avoid the offending substance altogether. Even small amounts of it may cause a similar reaction. Your child will also need to have medicines on stand-by. If you are unsure whether the food causes your child's condition to worsen, it is good to keep a food diary.

This way, you can tell if a particular food is the culprit. Bring the food diary with you when you consult your doctor. A food diary is helpful as it may indicate a hidden ingredient in the food that is causing the reaction.

Do not make the mistake of labeling your child with multiple food allergies without good evidence. Your child is growing and needs a variety of food to ensure adequate nutrition. Do consult a doctor in such a situation. There are simple allergy skin prick tests that can be done to aid diagnosis.



WILL MY CHILD OUTGROW THE FOOD ALLERGY?

Children usually outgrow some food allergies, such as milk and eggs but this is less likely with seafood and nut allergy. Your doctor may recommend re-testing after a certain age to confirm that the allergic reaction has waned.

WHAT ARE THE FOOD IMPLICATED?



In a study done locally, bird's nest was the most common culprit of severe food allergy (such as anaphylactic shock).

Other foods that can cause symptoms were eggs, milk (especially in young children). Nuts and fishes cause allergy in Western populations but are less common in Singapore.

WHAT ABOUT COLD DRINKS AND CHOCOLATES?

Such foods do not commonly cause allergies. Many different factors can trigger allergic symptoms and should be thoroughly evaluated before attributing symptom to food allergy. Poorly controlled asthma is more commonly a predisposing factor that allows multiple triggers to exacerbate asthma symptom. However, before changing your child's diet, be sure that your child has been properly evaluated.

