

What is a Food Allergy?

Food allergies affect [10.8% of adults and 7.6%](#) of children in the United States of America. For the past 20 years, food allergy has increased among U.S. children. It is most common in babies and children and can also be caused by foods you have eaten in the past. However, children with food allergies may outgrow their allergies as they grow older.

What is a food allergy?

A food allergy is a reaction made by the immune system when certain proteinous food called an Allergen is consumed. This occurs when the immune system that fights disease reacts to a food protein.

Food allergies can be mild or severe, ranging from symptoms like difficulty breathing, face or lip swelling, hives, and lightheadedness, or severe symptoms like anaphylaxis which may cause shock and respiratory problems.

It can sometimes be confused with food intolerance, but it is not. Food allergy is a much more severe condition.

What Causes Food Allergies

Food allergies develop when a person's immune system develops too much of an antibody called IgE. When this antibody comes in contact with food, chemicals called histamine are released, which causes allergy symptoms.

Which Food Items Need Extra Caution around Allergies

People with food allergies are advised to read food labels and be careful when they eat in restaurants so they can avoid the foods they are allergic to.

Any food can be an Allergen, with over 260 foods identified to cause allergies in individuals, but the most common food items that cause allergic reactions are:

- Milk

- Eggs
- Sesame
- Fish/finned fish
- Tree nuts
- Wheat
- Peanuts
- Soy
- Shellfish

[Statistics](#) have revealed that milk, egg, and peanut are the most common allergen for children, while shellfish, peanut, and tree nuts are the most common for adults. In addition, sesame was once declared a major allergen and is also a rising allergen that has impacted over 1 million children and adults in the U.S.

How to Test for Food Allergies

If you want to know how to test for food allergies, there are various factors to look out for. There is no particular rule on how to test for food allergies, but here are some factors your doctor will consider:

- **Symptoms and family history:** You can test for food allergies by giving your doctor details about your symptoms, the food that triggers them, and the history of family members who have similar allergies.
- **A skin test:** A skin test is another way to test for food allergies. The doctor pricks your skin with a needle after placing the suspected food on your skin (back or forearm). If you are allergic to the food, that part of your skin might develop a bump or rash.
- **A blood test:** A blood test measures how your immune system reacts to a particular food by measuring your IgE. This will indicate your sensitivity to the food.
- **Food elimination:** For some time, you may be asked to stop your intake of some particular suspected allergens for a week or two and add them back after a while to detect their effect on your body.
- **Oral intake:** This procedure is done by feeding you some suspected allergens in small but increasing amounts to see their effect on your body or to see if they will cause any symptoms.
- **The three T's:** At The Wellness Way, we have discovered that several [health problems](#) with no cure can be discovered and treated with the three T's (trauma,

toxins, and thoughts). With the 'Three T' method, our doctors can detect your food allergies and help you live healthier.