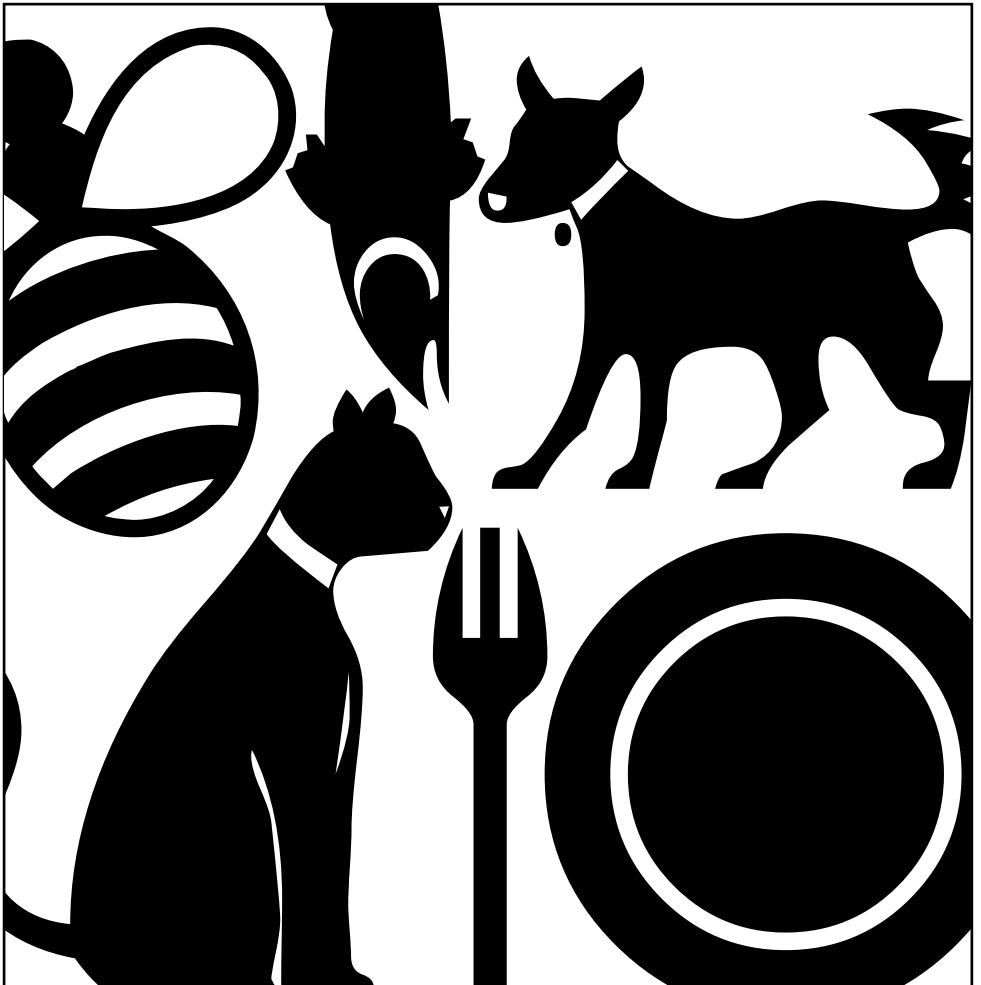


Children's Allergy Clinic

How to do an egg and cow's milk challenge at home

Information for parents



Your child's allergy assessment shows that it is now time to discover if they have outgrown their food allergy. This is done by giving your child the identified allergy causing food within a controlled environment. Your child's medical history and results show that it is safe for you to do this challenge from home.

How to pick a time to do the food challenge

Is your child well?

- To do a food challenge your child needs to be in good health. For example, if they have a cold, flu or any other childhood illness they should not do the test.
- Also, if your child is asthmatic or gets eczema, don't do the test unless their symptoms are well under control.
- If you are in any doubt about whether your child is well enough, postpone the food challenge for another time.

Where should we do the food challenge?

- The food challenge should be done at home in a calm environment with parental or adult supervision.
- Make sure you have enough time to do the challenge.

What if my child takes antihistamines?

It's important that your child does not have any antihistamine medication in their bodies before doing a food challenge.

Some antihistamines last longer than others. For example:

- Don't give your child Piriton (chlorpheniramine), Phenergan or Vallergan within 48 hours of starting the challenge.
- Don't give your child longer acting antihistamines e.g. Zirtek (cetirizine), Clarityn (loratadine) for a whole week before doing a food challenge.
- It's a good idea, if your child does use antihistamines, to do the food challenge at a time in the year when they are least affected by seasonal allergies.

Know what to do if your child has an allergic reaction!

It is important to have antihistamines available in case your child has a reaction at any stage of the challenge.

Before starting any food challenge, check the possible allergic symptoms (see below). If any of these symptoms occur, stop the food challenge and treat your child as needed.

Symptoms checklist – look and learn what to do!

<p>Mild to moderate symptoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tingling or itching sensation in the mouth• Feeling hot or very chilled• Intense itching• Rapid development of nettle rash/wheals (hives)• Swelling, particularly of the face• Rising anxiety/feeling scared• Nausea and/or vomiting• Abdominal (tummy) pain• Pale skin• Mild wheeziness. <p>Treatment: Give antihistamines and monitor child's condition. If wheezy give salbutamol inhaler if prescribed.</p>	<p>Severe symptoms (possibly life-threatening)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty in breathing – either wheezy and/or hoarseness and/or croupy sound• Decreased level of consciousness, faint, pale and floppy• Collapse. <p>Treatment: Call 999 and seek emergency help immediately.</p>
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The procedure for doing a food challenge at home

- Make sure you've read the information on page 2 under 'How to pick a time to do the food challenge'.
- If at any stage an allergic reaction occurs, stop the challenge and give the child some antihistamine. Continue to watch your child for 6-10 hours later as some allergic symptoms can develop a few hours after ingestion (eating).
- In the unlikely event that your child has a severe reaction, seek emergency help immediately. When they have recovered please contact the allergy department for a reassessment of your child's allergy management.

Specific information for an egg challenge

If your child has been avoiding all products with egg in them, then start with stage 1. If they can tolerate well-cooked egg in foods, then go straight to stage 2.

Egg challenge stage 1

1. Start the first challenge with a cake or a biscuit that contains well-cooked egg. Touch your child's lower lip with a crumb of the food. Wait 15 minutes before moving to the next step.
2. If there are no signs of an allergic reaction, continue by giving your child a crumb of the food to eat. Wait 15 minutes before the next step.
3. Increase the amounts at each stage from a crumb, to a pea sized amount, then a teaspoonful. If this first challenge is symptom free, then **gradually** add these foods to your child's diet.
4. Once your child is eating well-cooked egg within foods as part of their regular diet, go on to the stage 2 challenge a few weeks later.

5. If the challenge fails and your child has a mild/moderate reaction, then try again about 6 months later.

If your child has been tolerating foods containing well cooked egg such as cakes, biscuits, egg pasta, then proceed as follows:

Egg challenge stage 2

1. For the 2nd stage, crumble up a hard-boiled egg. Touch your child's lower lip with a crumb of the hard boiled egg. Wait 15 minutes before moving to the next step.
2. If no signs of an allergic reaction occur, continue by giving your child a crumb of the hard-boiled egg to eat. You may have to disguise it in a food your child is used to eating such as a small piece of bread. Wait 15 minutes before the next step.
3. Gradually increase the amounts of egg given, leaving 15 minutes in between each step. Start with a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a teaspoon, then $\frac{1}{2}$, 1 teaspoon to 2 teaspoons.
4. If your child is symptom free, then **gradually** add well-cooked egg to your child's diet.
5. If the challenge fails and your child has a mild/moderate reaction, then try again about 6 months later.

Beware!

Be cautious with products that contain raw egg, e.g. lightly cooked scrambled egg, meringue, homemade mayonnaise, uncooked cake mixture or puddings with uncooked egg such as mousse. Raw egg is the most allergenic form and some children will still react to raw egg after eating or touching it, even when they can tolerate cooked egg. These foods, such as lightly cooked scrambled egg, etc. can be cautiously tried once your child is having cooked egg within his or her diet.

Specific information for a milk challenge

If your child has been avoiding all products containing cow's milk, then proceed with stage 1. If they are tolerating cow's milk in foods, then go straight to stage 2.

Cow's milk challenge stage 1

1. Start the first challenge with cake or a biscuit that contains cow's milk. Touch your child's lower lip with a crumb of the food. Wait 15 minutes before the next step.
2. If no signs of an allergic reaction occur, continue by giving your child a crumb of the food to eat. Wait 15 minutes before the next step.
3. Increase the amounts every 15 minutes from a crumb, to a pea sized amount, to a teaspoonful.
4. If this first challenge is symptom free, gradually add these foods to your child's normal diet.
5. Once your child is eating these foods regularly as part of their normal diet, proceed to the second challenge a few weeks later.
6. If the challenge fails and your child has a mild/moderate reaction, then try again about 6 months later.

If your child has been tolerating foods with cow's milk in them such as cakes and biscuits, then proceed as follows:

Cow's milk challenge stage 2

1. Touch your child's lower lip with a drop of cow's milk. Wait 15 minutes.
2. If no signs of an allergic reaction occur after 15 minutes, continue by giving your child a drop of milk to drink. Wait another 15 minutes before the next step.

3. Gradually increase the amounts of milk every 15 minutes from ½ teaspoon then 1, 2, 4, to 8 teaspoons. It may be necessary to disguise it in a small amount of liquid that your child is used to drinking.
4. If this second challenge is symptom free, then **gradually** add cow's milk and other dairy products to your child's normal diet.
5. If the challenge fails and your child has a mild/moderate reaction, then try again about 6 months later.

Some children may continue to have cow's milk intolerance. They may be able to tolerate a certain amount of cow's milk, e.g. milk within foods or up to one glass of milk a day. If they have more than a particular amount then they may develop allergic symptoms which can often be delayed up to 12-48 hours later. It is therefore sensible to continue giving your child the certain amount that they can tolerate.

Further information

The Anaphylaxis Campaign

PO Box 275, Farnborough, Hampshire GU14 6SX

Helpline: 01252 542 029

www.anaphylaxis.org.uk

Allergy UK

Planwell House, LEFA Business Park, Edgington Way, Sidcup, Kent DA14 5BH

Helpline: 01322 619 898

www.allergyuk.org

Asthma Uk

Summit House, 70 Wilson Street, London. EC2A 2DB

Tel: 020 7786 4900 Helpline: 0800 121 6244

www.asthma.org.uk

National Eczema Society

Hill House, Highgate Hill, London N19 5NA

Tel: 020 7281 3553 Helpline: 0800 089 1122

(Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm)

www.eczema.org

BAD British Association of Dermatologists

4 Fitzroy Square, London. W1T 5HQ

Tel: 020 7383 0266

www.bad.org.uk

Epipens

For more information on Epipens and to obtain free trainer

Epipen: www.epipen.co.uk

References:

(Sampson et al 1992)

(ALK-ABELLO UK 1997)

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@ouh.nhs.uk**

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