

Is Your Diet Hurting Your Health?
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Do you ever wonder if the foods you are eating are doing you harm? It is estimated that 15% of the population suffers from some form of food sensitivity. These food intolerances are now being recognized as playing a significant role in many chronic and acute diseases.

Food allergies are usually clear. If you have ever come into contact with an allergy, you will remember. Picture a peanut or shellfish allergy; these can result in an anaphylactic reaction with symptoms such as shortness of breath, throat closure, hives and palpitations among others. A food allergy is an immune reaction to even small doses of a particular food. The body creates antibodies, which releases histamines when they come into contact with the foods they were created to protect against.

Food sensitivities or intolerances are much more common than food allergies. They can result from a deficiency in the appropriate digestive enzymes needed to digest a particular food substance. The problem usually begins in the stomach. Symptoms of food intolerance usually take longer to appear than food allergies, and require larger portions to produce a reaction. A common example is lactose intolerance which is a result of the body not producing enough lactase to break down the lactose in milk. One common food intolerance is salicylates. Salicylates are chemicals that can be found in apples, citrus fruits, strawberries, tomatoes and wine. Salicylate sensitivity causes many symptoms the most common of which are: hives, stomach pain, head aches and mouth ulcers. It has even been linked to ADD and ADHD. Food intolerances typically manifest in one of four places: the skin, the intestines, the respiratory passages, and the brain.

Common Signs of Food Sensitivity			
Skin	Respiratory Tract	Intestines	Behavior
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hives • Red, sand-paper like facial rash • Dry, scaly, itchy skin (mostly on the face) • Swelling in hands and feet • Puffy eyelids • Dark circles under eyes • Lip swelling • Tongue soreness and cracks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sneezing • Runny/stuffy nose • Wheezing • Watery eyes • Rattling chest • Persistent cough • Congestion • Bronchitis • Recurring ear infections 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burn like rash around anus • Abdominal discomfort • Mucusy diarrhea • Constipation • Intestinal bleeding • Poor weight gain • Bloating, gassiness • Excessive spitting up • Vomiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Migraine headaches • Hyperactivity • Crying • Irritability • Night waking • Anxiety • Crankiness • Sore muscles and joints

Most Allergenic Foods			
Berries Buckwheat Chocolate Cinnamon Citrus fruits	Coconut Corn Dairy products Egg Whites Mustard	Nuts Peanut butter Peas Pork Shellfish	Soy Tomatoes Wheat Yeast
Least Allergenic Foods			
Apples Apricots Asparagus Avocados Barley Beets Broccoli Carrots	Cauliflower Chicken Cranberries Dates Grapes Honey Lamb Lettuce	Mangoes Oats Papayas Peaches Pears Raisins Rice Rye	Safflower oil Salmon Squash Sunflower oil Sweet potatoes Turkey Veal
Other words for allergenic foods:		Note:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheat flour: durum, semolina, farina • Egg white: albumen • Dairy products: whey, casein, sodium caseinate 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noodles and pasta contain wheat and sometimes eggs • Canned soups may contain wheat and dairy fillers • Hot dogs, cold cuts and nondairy desserts contain sodium caseinate 	

How to Track Down Your Hidden Food Sensitivities

Keep a Food Record	Over a 4 day period, record everything that gets eaten. Keep track of any symptoms that you feel may be caused by food allergies. Remember that it may take up to 48 hours to experience a reaction.
Try an Elimination Diet	Circle the suspect foods (i.e. dairy products, soy, egg whites, wheat, peanuts, citrus fruits, shellfish and food additives). Pick out the most plausible allergens, and eliminate them for at least 30 days, and keep track of any reactions. Avoid multiple ingredient foods, as they make it difficult to isolate the offender. Focus on objective signs and symptoms.
Challenge your Findings	Test your findings by reintroducing suspicious foods one at a time, seeing if the signs and symptoms reappear. If they do, the food goes on your no list for at least a few months. Later, you can find out if the allergy is dose related by reintroducing the food, beginning with a small amount once every 4 days and then increase the frequency and amount until the symptoms reappear.
Get a Blood Test	Elimination and reintroduction of foods is not for everyone as it can be very time consuming and difficult to monitor. It requires a high degree of motivation and compliance. A simple IgG Food Intolerance blood test

	can be done to identify which foods should be eliminated.
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