



Food Allergy or Food Intolerance?

- ^ **Some Facts**
- ^ **Food Intolerance**
- ^ **Food Allergy**
 - ^ **Anaphylaxis**
- ^ **Diagnosis & Treatment**

Some Facts



1

Between 6-8% of children and up to 4% of adults suffer from **food allergy**¹

2

Approximately 20% of the population believe they suffer from **food intolerance**¹

3

There is a very serious difference between food allergy & food intolerance. Food allergy can be life-threatening



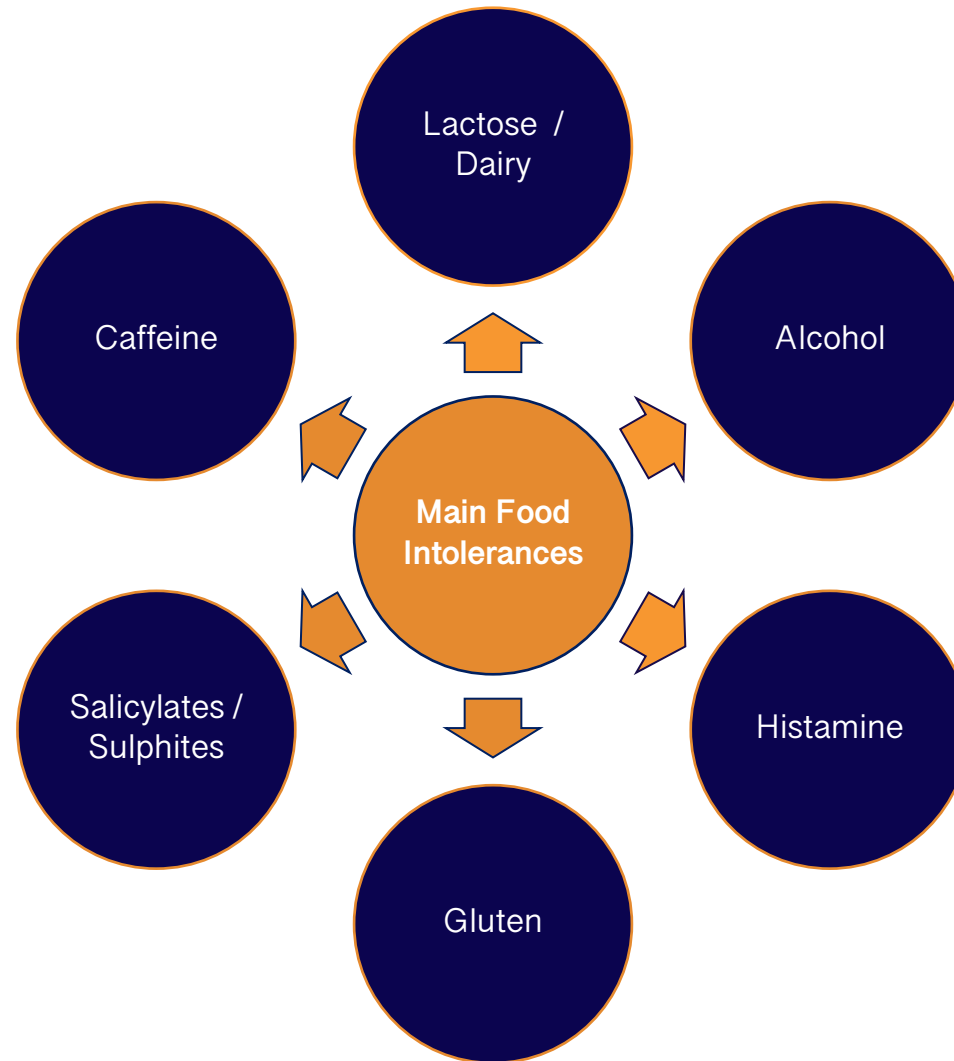
Food Intolerance

What is Food Intolerance?

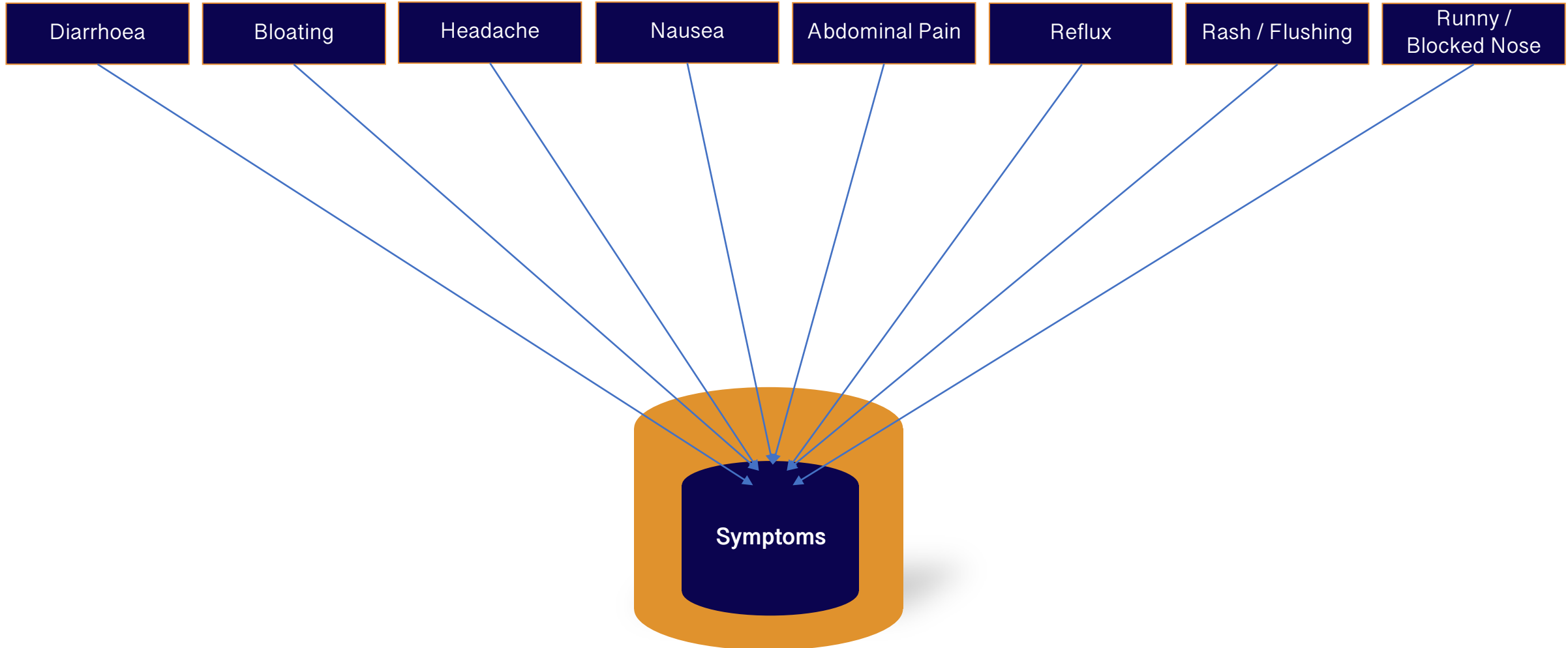
- ^ Food intolerance means that either the body cannot properly digest certain food types that are eaten or a particular food might irritate the digestive system. Food intolerance **does not** involve the immune system and an allergic reaction **does not** occur
- ^ Symptoms occur only if you eat substantial amounts of that food type unlike food allergy where traces can trigger a reaction
- ^ Symptoms can be debilitating and have a major impact on work & social life
- ^ Reactions are usually delayed up to 72hrs
- ^ There is no medication to prevent food intolerance. The goal of treatment is to avoid the foods that cause the symptoms

Although symptoms can be very uncomfortable, they are never life-threatening

Main Food Intolerances Identified



Common Food Intolerance – Signs & Symptoms





Food Allergy

What is Food Allergy?

- ^ A food allergy **does involve the immune system**. It happens when the body's immune system responds abnormally to a certain food. The body's immune system, which normally fights infection, sees the food as a foreign invader, leading to an allergic reaction through the release of histamines and other chemicals
- ^ Before having an allergic reaction to a certain type of food (e.g. nuts), a person must have been exposed to that specific food at least once before (or could also be sensitised through breast milk). It is the second time a person eats the specific food that the allergic symptoms occur
- ^ Reactions are immediate or within 1-2 hours
- ^ There is no medication to prevent food allergy. The goal of treatment is to avoid the foods that cause the symptoms

Food allergy causes an immune response with symptoms ranging from uncomfortable to life-threatening

Types of Food Allergy

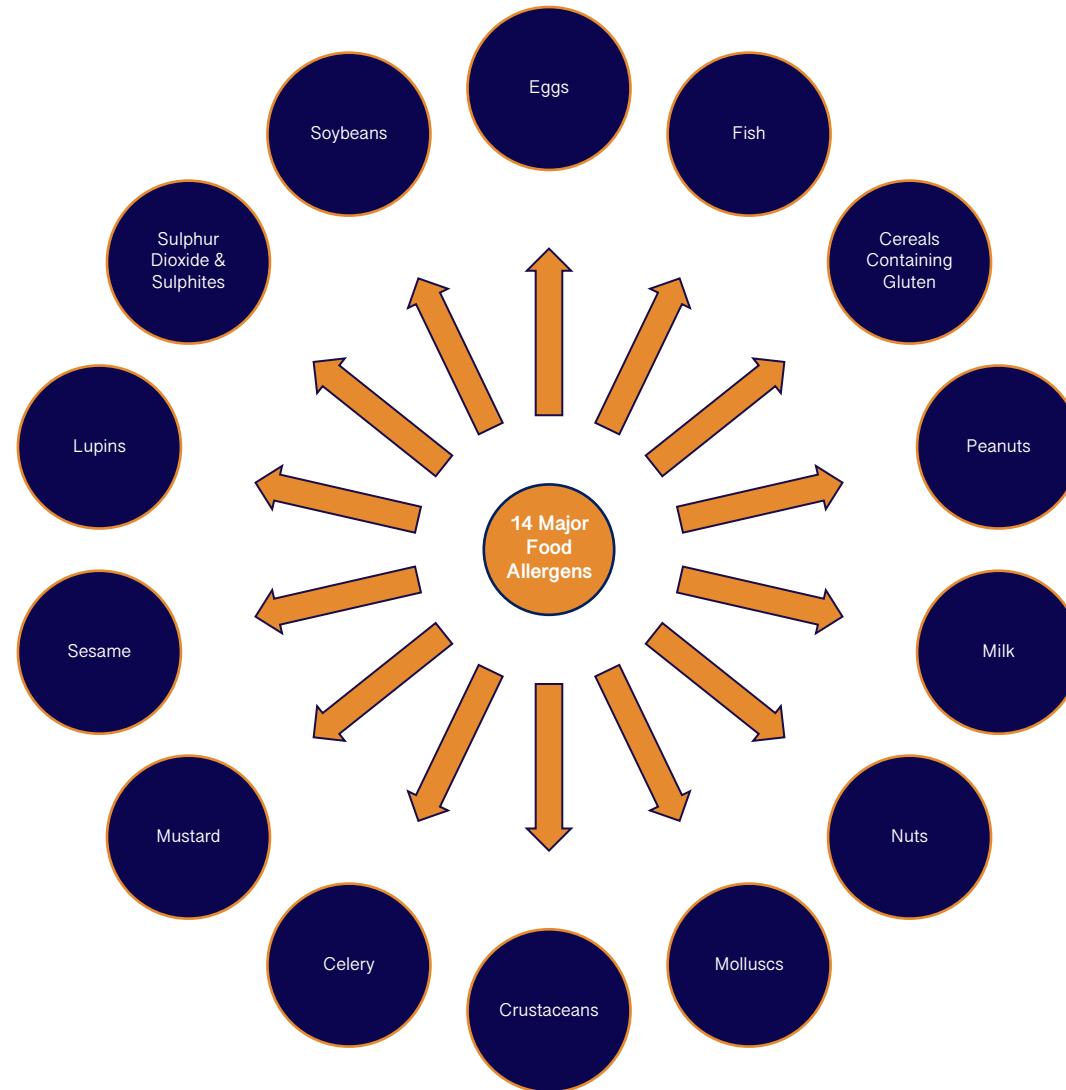
IgE Mediated Food Allergy

The reaction is immediate and can be severe. This reaction involves IgE antibodies which are produced by your immune system.

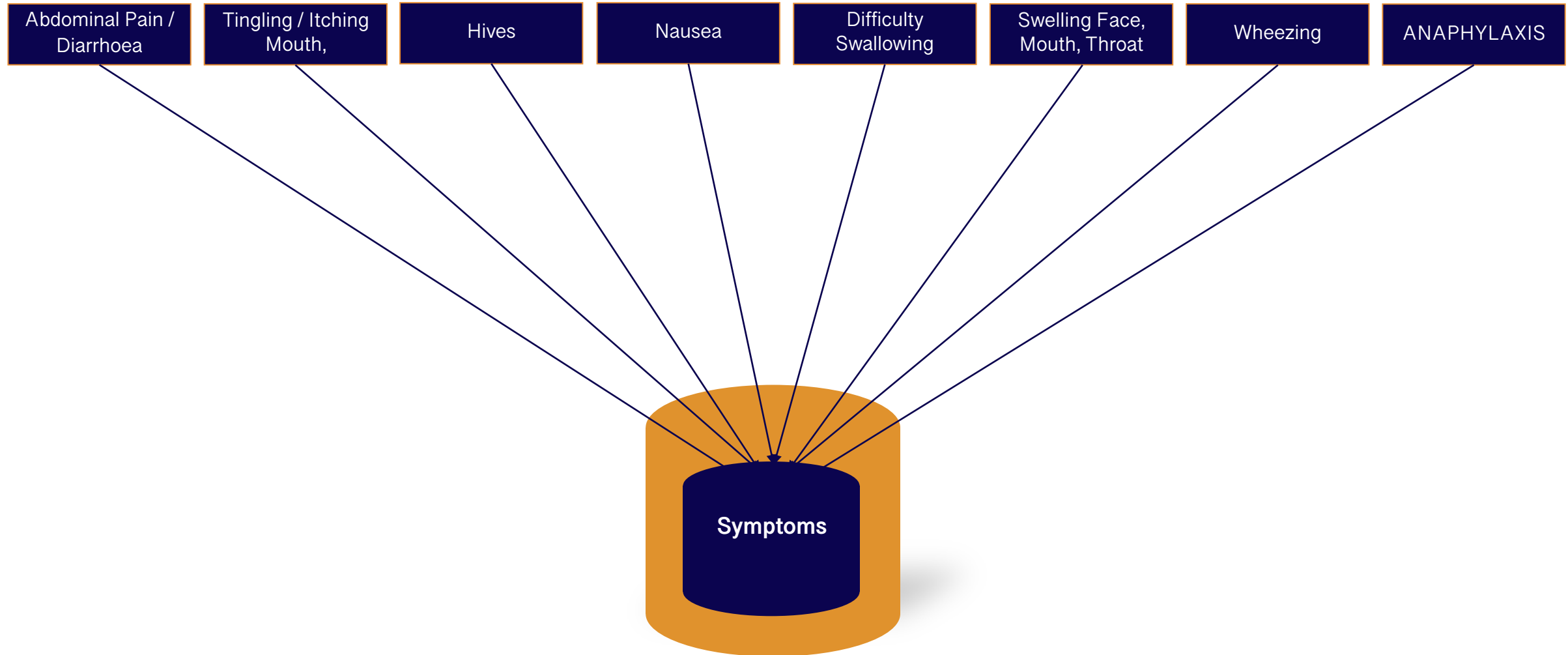
Non-IgE Mediated Food Allergy

The reaction is delayed or 'slow onset'. The immune system is involved but not IgE antibodies.

14 Main Food Allergens Identified



Common Food Allergy – Signs & Symptoms





Anaphylaxis

What is Anaphylaxis?

^ Anaphylaxis is:

^ A severe life-threatening, rapidly developing, generalised or systemic hypersensitive reaction

^ A wide range of symptoms may occur due to anaphylaxis, but not all will be experienced. They may vary in severity and speed depending on the person, symptoms include:

- ^ Rash / hives anywhere on the body
- ^ Swelling of the lips, face, mouth, throat
- ^ Difficulty breathing, swallowing or speaking
- ^ Abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- ^ Sudden feeling of weakness
- ^ Feeling of impending doom
- ^ Collapse / unconsciousness
- ^ Alteration in heart rate



What is Anaphylaxis Continued

It is likely to be anaphylaxis if the following 3 things happen:

- A** ➡ **Airway:** persistent cough, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing, swollen tongue
- B** ➡ **Breathing:** difficult or noisy breathing, wheeze or persistent cough
- C** ➡ **Consciousness:** persistent dizziness / pale or floppy, suddenly sleepy, collapse

Diagnosis & Treatment

Diagnosis

Food allergy and food intolerance should be diagnosed by a specialist. There are a number of diagnostic tests for food allergy. There are currently no reliable tests to diagnose food intolerance, except lactose intolerance.

Treatment

Currently the only treatment for food allergy and food intolerance is the avoidance of the known food trigger(s).

Wellbeing

An expert assessment of the diet is essential for all children on food avoidance diets, and also for adults who are excluding milk or wheat.

People with food allergy should carry their prescribed medication at all times and know when and how to take it.

Some Key Differences Between Food Allergy & Food Intolerance

TYPE	Involves The Immune System	Limited to Digestive Problems	Rapid Onset of Symptoms	Trace Amounts Can Cause a Reaction	Can Be Life-Threatening?
FOOD INTOLERANCE	NO	YES	Not Normally, Delayed Response	Not Normally	NO
FOOD ALLERGY	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES



Remember, there is a very serious difference between food allergy & food intolerance. Food allergy can be life-threatening.

Useful Websites

- ^ www.allergyuk.org
- ^ www.bsaci.org
- ^ www.sparepensinschools.uk/
- ^ www.resus.org.uk
- ^ www.anaphylaxis.org.uk
- ^ www.ifan.ie
- ^ www.asthma.org.uk
- ^ www.eaaci.org
- ^ www.bda.uk.com

