

DO YOU HAVE FOOD ALLERGIES?

A food allergy is an adverse immune response to a food protein. When an allergic reaction occurs, the immune system reacts by releasing antibodies. Two commonly produced antibodies are IgG (immunoglobulin G) and IgE (immunoglobulin E). Life threatening food allergies are classic hypersensitivity reactions mediated by IgE such as: shellfish or peanuts. Delayed food allergies or food sensitivities are not life threatening and are mediated by IgG such as: wheat gluten, dairy products, eggs, soy, citrus. These are the food allergies that decrease everyday quality of life, even if they're not classified as medical emergencies (that's why they're often referred to as food 'intolerances' or 'sensitivities'). While the foods mentioned above are among the most common IgG allergies, a person can develop an allergy to virtually any food protein.

Food Sensitivities Related to IgG Allergies

IgG allergic reactions occur over several hours or days. Over time, allergen-antibody complexes accumulate and are deposited in body tissues causing inflammation,

which contributes to a variety of health problems:

- Digestion: acid reflux, diarrhea, nausea, constipation, gas, bloating, cramping
- Immune: sore throat, frequent colds and flu's, ear infections
- Musculoskeletal: joint pain, muscle pain, inflammatory (rheumatoid) arthritis
- Skin: eczema, psoriasis, hives, red itchy eyes, itchy skin
- Brain: hyperactivity, depression, anxiety, inability to concentrate, migraine headaches

Why Test for Food Allergies?

Undiagnosed food allergies may contribute to symptoms and biochemical changes that decrease quality of life, eventually leading to illness. A food allergy test measures your immune system's reaction to a variety of foods. It is a valuable tool that helps to develop a very specific nutritional plan for you, and to identify foods that are decreasing your wellbeing. To find out if a food allergy test would be helpful for you, talk to your Naturopathic doctor.

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