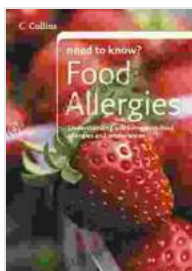


# Food Allergies: Everything You Need to Know



Food allergies are a growing problem, affecting up to 10% of children and 4% of adults. They occur when the body's immune system overreacts to a particular food, mistaking it for a harmful substance. This can trigger a range of symptoms, from mild itching and hives to life-threatening anaphylaxis.



## Food Allergies (Collins Need to Know?)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 307 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 192 pages



The most common food allergies are to:

- Milk
- Eggs
- Peanuts
- Tree nuts
- Soy
- Wheat
- Fish
- Shellfish

Food allergies can be diagnosed through a variety of tests, including skin prick tests, blood tests, and oral food challenges. Once a food allergy has been diagnosed, the best way to manage it is to avoid the offending food. This can be challenging, as many foods contain hidden allergens. However, there are a number of resources available to help people with food allergies live safe and healthy lives.

## **Symptoms of Food Allergies**

The symptoms of food allergies can vary depending on the severity of the allergy and the amount of food that was consumed. Mild symptoms may

include:

- Itching or hives
- Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal pain

More severe symptoms may include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening allergic reaction that can occur within minutes of eating an allergen. Symptoms of anaphylaxis include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

- Abdominal pain
- Dizziness
- Lightheadedness
- Loss of consciousness

If you experience any of these symptoms, you should seek medical attention immediately.

## **Diagnosis of Food Allergies**

Food allergies can be diagnosed through a variety of tests, including:

- **Skin prick tests:** These tests involve pricking the skin with a small amount of the suspected allergen. If the person is allergic to the allergen, a raised, itchy bump will develop at the site of the prick.
- **Blood tests:** These tests measure the amount of antibodies in the blood that are specific to a particular allergen. If the person is allergic to the allergen, the blood test will show elevated levels of antibodies.
- **Oral food challenges:** These tests involve giving the person a small amount of the suspected allergen to eat. If the person is allergic to the allergen, they will experience symptoms within minutes or hours of eating it.

Your doctor will recommend the best test or combination of tests based on your individual symptoms and history.

## **Treatment of Food Allergies**

There is no cure for food allergies, but they can be managed by avoiding the offending food. This can be challenging, as many foods contain hidden allergens. However, there are a number of resources available to help people with food allergies live safe and healthy lives.

Some of the most important things that people with food allergies can do include:

- **Read food labels carefully.** Food labels must list all of the ingredients in the food, including any hidden allergens.
- **Cook more meals at home.** This way, you can control the ingredients in your food and avoid hidden allergens.
- **Be aware of cross-contamination.** Cross-contamination occurs when food comes into contact with another food that contains an allergen. This can happen in restaurants, at school, or even at home.
- **Carry an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen).** An EpiPen is a life-saving medication that can be used to treat anaphylaxis. People with food allergies should always carry an EpiPen with them in case they accidentally eat an allergen.

If you have a food allergy, it is important to see your doctor regularly to discuss your management plan and make sure that you are taking all of the necessary precautions.

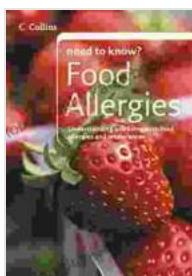
## **Prevention of Food Allergies**

There is no sure way to prevent food allergies, but there are a few things that parents can do to reduce the risk of their children developing them.

- **Introduce solid foods early.** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends introducing solid foods to infants at around 4 to 6 months of age. This helps to expose the child's immune system to a variety of foods and may reduce the risk of developing allergies.
- **Avoid giving your child foods that you are allergic to.** If you have a food allergy, there is a higher risk that your child will develop an allergy to the same food.
- **Be aware of cross-contamination.** Cross-contamination occurs when food comes into contact with another food that contains an allergen. This can happen in restaurants, at school, or even at home. Be sure to wash your hands and surfaces thoroughly after handling any food that contains an allergen.

If you are concerned about your child's risk of developing food allergies, talk to your doctor.

Food allergies are a growing problem, but they can be managed by avoiding the offending food. This can be challenging, but there are a number of resources available to help people with food allergies live safe and healthy lives.



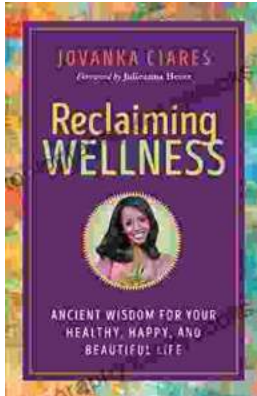
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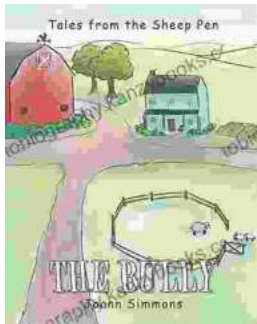
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