

Food Allergy Awareness Month

May is Food Allergy Awareness Month! It helps raise awareness of food allergies and life threatening allergic reactions.

Did you know that over 32 million Americans live with potentially life-threatening food allergies?

- Approximately every 3 minutes, a food allergy reaction sends someone to the emergency room!
- There are 9 foods that account for 90% of all food allergy reactions:
 - Peanuts
 - Tree Nuts
 - Milk
 - Eggs
 - Wheat
 - Soy
 - Fish
 - Shellfish
 - Sesame

Learn more about food allergies [here!](#)

Allergies can begin in childhood or as an adult and any food can trigger an allergy!

- Allergic reactions are unpredictable! They can range from mild to severe.
- Symptoms typically appear within minutes to hours after eating the food you are allergic to.

So what are allergies and when do they occur?

- Allergies occur when the body's immune system overreacts to an otherwise harmless protein known as an allergen.

What are the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction)?

- Anaphylaxis has the potential to become life threatening, so it is important to know when it is happening to you or a loved one!
- Common signs and symptoms:
 - Mouth:
 - Itching, tingling, swelling of the lips/tongue, roof of the mouth
 - Throat*:
 - Hoarseness, tightening of throat, difficulty swallowing, hacking cough, stridor (a loud pitched sound when breathing in)
 - Lungs*:
 - Shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing, chest pain, tightness
 - Gut:
 - Abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
 - CNS/Brain:
 - Anxiety, panic, sense of doom

- Eyes/Nose:
 - Runny nose, stuffy nose, sneezing, watery red eyes, itchy eyes, swollen eyes
- Skin:
 - Hives or other rash, redness/flushing, itching, swelling
- Circulation/Heart*:
 - Chest pain, low blood pressure, weak pulse, shock, pale blue color, dizziness or fainting, lethargy (lack of energy)

*Indicates it is an immediate and potentially life threatening symptom!

How do I treat anaphylaxis?

- Call 911 IMMEDIATELY!
- Epinephrine is the **first-line** of treatment!
- If you have a severe allergy ALWAYS carry two epinephrine auto-injectors at all times.
- Antihistamines (Benadryl, Zyrtec, etc.), inhalers, and other treatments should only be used as a secondary treatment.

Is there a cure for allergies?

- There is no cure for food allergies, avoidance is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction.
- This can be challenging depending on how severe your allergies are. When out at restaurants, ask the waiter or waitress if you are unsure about the ingredients in a dish! Most restaurants will do what they can to help you out!

While we do not offer a test that determines food allergies, we do offer a [service](#) to help learn about your food sensitivities!

- Sometimes certain foods can make you feel unwell, regardless if they're healthy or not. They may trigger any number of food sensitivity symptoms such as headaches, digestive issues, joint pain or skin problems.
- Food sensitivities are largely undiagnosed and seem to be on the rise.
- While they are clearly less scary than a full-blown food allergy, these mysterious and highly individualistic conditions can still make us sick.
- Bremo uses US Biotek lab for our food sensitivity testing and specifically measures your response to IgG cells only to give you results of food sensitivities you might have,
 - This does NOT test for food allergies or food intolerance.

Contact us to learn more or schedule your food sensitivity test. Call 804-288-8361 ex. 119 to schedule your appointment today!!

Resources:

<https://nationaltoday.com/food-allergy-action-month/>

<https://www.atlantaallergy.com/articles/view/212-fare-food-allergy-awareness-week-may-13-19>

https://www.foodallergyawareness.org/media/food%20allergy%20awareness%20month/2023_FAACT_FAAW_Proclamation%20Tool%20Kit.pdf