

Hidden Food Allergies

By

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When we think of food allergies most people think of the obvious food allergies, such as an allergy to peanuts, in which the body provokes an immediate and possibly severe response. This type of allergy is caused by an IgE antibody. The IgE mitigated allergy accounts for about 5% of all food allergies. A more common allergy is one that most people are not aware of, but accounts for 95% of all food allergies. This type of food allergy is mitigated by IgA or IgG antibodies. This type of allergy is considered a hidden food allergy or sensitivity because most people are unaware of the symptoms. An IgA or IgG antibody does not cause an immediate response. It could take 24 to 72 hours after eating the offending food that a reaction may occur. Even after this time the reaction is much milder so it may be hard for someone to detect a reaction, and since it is so delayed it makes it very difficult to find the culprit. You may be having a reaction to a certain food but not know it because your symptoms do not appear immediately following eating a certain food. Some of the common signs of food allergies are:

- Runny nose, sneezing, wheezing stuffy nose
- Watery eyes
- Bronchitis
- Recurring ear infections
- Persistent cough, congestion, rattling chest
- Red sand paper like facial rash , hives, eczema
- Swelling in hands and feet
- Dry, scaly, itchy skin (mostly on face)
- Dark circles under eyes, puffy eyelids
- Lip swelling, tongue soreness and cracks
- Mucous diarrhea, constipation, bloating, gassiness

To look for in Children:

- Above signs
- Excessive spitting up
- Vomiting
- Intestinal bleeding
- Poor weight gain
- Burn like rash around anus
- Abdominal discomfort

To look for in Infants:

- Redness around mouth usually within 1-2 hours or around the anus within 12-24 hours
- Abdominal bloating, gas and distension
- Constipation, diarrhea or foul odor to stools
- Vomiting or frequent spitting-up
- Nasal and/or chest congestion and runny nose, chronic middle ear infections, asthma
- Red, chapped eczema-like skin on face, groin, bottom or anywhere on the body
- Colic, fussiness, difficult sleeping
- Failure to thrive, loss of appetite

Some of the most common foods that cause allergic reactions are:

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| • Wheat | • Soy | • Eggs |
| • Gluten | • Beef | • Beef |
| • Dairy | • Corn | • Citrus |

There are many symptom and conditions that can be caused by hidden food allergies because we continue to eat the offending foods, unaware that our body is putting out an immune response that can eventually put tremendous wear and tear on our bodies and cause other problems. Many times if we do not find an offending food and stop eating it, it can lead to leaky gut which in turn makes us allergic to more foods and a vicious cycle starts. Some of the conditions that we might not associate with hidden food allergies are:

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| • Acne | • Fatigue | • Candidiasis |
| • Arthritis | • Headaches/Migraines | • Ulcers |
| • Asthma | • Mental confusion | • Eczema |
| • Respiratory Problems | • Insomnia | • Hives/Puffing |
| • Colitis & Diarrhea | • Intestinal Problems | • Postnasal Drip |
| • Depression | • Overweight | |
| | • Sinus Problems | |

To find out if you have a hidden food allergy you can do an elimination diet. To do this you take out of your diet all of the most highly allergenic foods or you may simply take one out at a time. You will need to abstain from eating this food(s) for at least 2 weeks to let your immune system rest and clear your body of any remaining antigens. Then introduce one food at a time and wait for at least 3 to 4 days before adding another food. Note how you feel. You will most likely get a more detectable response from any offending food because you have given your immune system a chance to rest and it now has the ability to respond in a more powerful way. Once you have discovered the offending foods you can plan your diet around this and avoid these foods as much as possible. By finding any possible problem foods, you are giving your immune system the rest it needs, beginning the process of letting your digestive tract heal and quite possibly head off more serious conditions that could have resulted from this problem.

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