

**If you are breast-feeding, avoid eggs.** If your child has an egg allergy, he or she may react to proteins passed through your milk. **Allergic people could wear a badge- "I am allergic to egg".** This can be especially important if you or your child has a severe reaction and can not tell caregivers or others what is going on.

**How is egg allergy treated \_?**

Antihistamines may help to relieve mild symptoms of egg allergy, such as itching. In addition, your allergist may prescribe adrenaline injection, to be taken in the event there are symptoms of anaphylaxis a potentially fatal reaction that includes shortness of breath, swelling of the throat, and dizziness from a sudden drop in blood pressure. An injection should be kept with you at all times and used as soon as symptoms start to appear. You or someone near you should also call for an ambulance, even if adrenaline provides relief, as the symptoms may recur.

**Can a vaccination cause egg allergy \_?**

Some vaccines contain egg proteins. In some people, these vaccines pose a risk of triggering an allergic reaction.

**Flu (Influenza) vaccines** sometimes contain small amounts of egg proteins.

**Yellow fever vaccine** can provoke an allergic reaction in some people who have egg allergy.

**Rabies vaccines** also can cause a reaction in people with egg allergy.

**Other vaccines** are generally not risky for people who have egg allergy. But ask your doctor, just to be safe. If your doctor is concerned about a vaccine, he or she may test you or your child to see whether it is likely to cause a reaction.

**For an egg-free diet**

**Avoid foods that contain eggs or any of these ingredients:**

- 1. Albumin (also spelled albumen)
- 2. Egg (dried, powdered, solids, white, yolk)
- 3. Eggnog
- 4. Globulin
- 5. Livetin
- 6. Lysozyme
- 7. Mayonnaise
- 8. Meringue (meringue powder)
- 9. Surimi
- 10. Vitellin
- 11. Words starting with "ovo" or "ova" (such as ovalbumin)

**Egg is sometimes found in the following:**

- 1. Baked goods
- 2. Breaded items
- 3. Drink foam alcoholic, specialty coffee)
- 4. Egg substitutes
- 5. Fried rice
- 6. Ice cream
- 7. Lecithin
- 8. Marzipan
- 9. Marshmallows
- 10. Meatloaf or meatballs
- 11. Nougat
- 12. Pasta

**Keep the following in mind:**

- Individuals with egg allergy should also avoid eggs from duck, turkey, goose, quail, etc., as these are known to be cross-reactive with chicken egg.
- While the whites of an egg contain the allergenic proteins, patients with an egg allergy must avoid all eggs completely.

[www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)



**ALLERGY & IMMUNO THERAPY CLINIC  
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**Egg  
Allergy**



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**What is an allergy \_?**

An allergy refers to an exaggerated reaction by our immune system in response to exposure to certain foreign substances. It is exaggerated because these foreign substances are usually seen by the body as harmless and no response occurs in non-allergic people. In allergic individuals, the body recognizes the foreign substance as harmful and one arm of the immune system generates a response.

**What causes an allergy \_?**

Allergy-producing substances are called "allergens." Examples of allergens include house dust mites, pollens, moulds, animal proteins, foods and even medications.

To understand the language of allergy, it is important to remember that allergens are substances that are foreign to the body and can cause an allergic reaction in certain people. When an allergic individual comes in contact with an allergen, the immune system mounts a response through the IgE antibody. Therefore, people who are prone to allergies are said to be allergic or "atopic."

**What is egg allergy \_?**

Egg allergy is one of the most common food allergies in children, second only to milk allergy. Experts estimate that as many as 2 percent of children are allergic to eggs. Fortunately, studies show that about 70 percent of children with an egg allergy will outgrow the condition by age 16.

Still, the stakes are high: Children who are allergic to eggs can have reactions ranging from a mild rash to anaphylaxis, a life-threatening condition that impairs breathing and can lead to body and its functions to shut down (shock).

**What causes egg allergy \_?**

Egg allergies are caused by an immune system overreaction. The immune system mistakenly identifies certain egg proteins as harmful. When you or your child comes in contact with egg proteins, immune system cells (antibodies) recognize them and signal the immune system to release histamine and other

chemicals that cause allergic signs and symptoms.

Both egg yolks and egg whites contain proteins that can cause allergies, but allergy to egg whites is most common. It is possible for breast-fed infants to have an allergic reaction to egg proteins in breast milk if the mother consumes eggs.

**What are the symptoms of egg allergy \_?**

Egg allergy symptoms usually occur a few minutes to a few hours after eating eggs or foods containing eggs.

**Mild**

- ☞ The most common egg allergy reaction are skin inflammation or hives
- ☞ Allergic nasal inflammation (allergic rhinitis)
- ☞ Digestive (gastrointestinal) symptoms, such as cramps, nausea and vomiting
- ☞ Asthma signs and symptoms such as coughing, chest tightness or shortness of breath

**Severe**

- ☞ Life-threatening emergency requires an immediate adrenaline injection and a visit to the hospital
- ☞ Constriction of airways, including a swollen throat or a lump in your throat that makes it difficult to breathe
- ☞ Abdominal pain and cramping
- ☞ Rapid pulse
- ☞ Shock, with a severe drop in blood pressure felt as dizziness, light-headedness or loss of consciousness

**What are the risk factors \_?**

Certain factors may increase the risk of developing an egg allergy:

**Atopic dermatitis.** Children with this type of skin reaction are much more likely to develop a food allergy than are children who do not have skin problems.

**Family history.** You are at increased risk of a food allergy if one or both of your parents have asthma, food allergy or another type of allergy.

**Age.** Egg allergy is most common in children. As you grow older, the digestive system matures and allergic food reactions are less likely to occur.

**What are the complications \_?**

The most significant complication of egg allergy is having a severe allergic reaction requiring an adrenaline injection and emergency treatment.

The same immune system reaction that causes egg allergy can also cause other conditions. If you have an egg allergy, you may be at increased risk of:

- ☞ Allergies to other foods, such as milk, soy or peanuts
- ☞ An allergic reaction to pet dander, dust mites or grass pollen
- ☞ Allergic skin reactions such as atopic dermatitis
- ☞ Asthma, which in turn increases the risk of having a severe allergic reaction to eggs or other foods

**How is it diagnosed \_?**

Your doctor will start with a medical history and examination. Your doctor may also recommend one or more of the following tests:

**Skin prick test.**

The skin prick test involves:

- ☞ Placing a small amount of substances that may be causing your symptoms on the skin, most often on the forearm, only in exceptional cases the skin of the prostrate back can be used as an alternative.
- ☞ The skin is then pricked so the allergen goes under the skin's surface.
- ☞ The healthcare provider closely watches the skin for swelling and redness or other signs of a reaction. Results are usually seen within 15 to 20 minutes.

To test for egg allergy, a small amount of a liquid containing egg protein is placed on the back or forearm, which is then pricked with a small, sterile probe to allow the liquid to seep into the skin. A raised, reddish spot forms within 15 to 20 minutes can indicate an allergy.

**Food challenge.** This test involves giving you or your child small amounts of egg to see if it causes a reaction. If nothing happens, more egg is given, and you or your child will again be watched for signs of a food allergy.

**Food tracking or elimination diet.** Your or your child's doctor may have you keep a detailed diary of the consumed foods that you or your child eats, and may ask you to eliminate eggs or other foods from your diet or your child's diet one at a time, to see whether symptoms improve.

Blood and skin tests are often used along with food challenges and diet changes.

If your doctor suspects that symptoms may be caused by something other than a food allergy, you or your child may need tests to identify — or rule out — other possible causes.

**How can you prevent egg allergy \_?**

**Here are some things you can do to avoid an allergic reaction, and to keep it from getting worse if one does occur.**

**Know what you are eating and drinking.** Read food labels carefully. In some people, foods that list only trace amounts of egg can cause a reaction. In addition to carefully reading labels, being cautious when eating out and using egg-free products at home can help you or your child avoid an unpleasant or dangerous reaction.

**Be cautious when eating out.** Keep in mind, your server or even the cook may not be completely certain about whether a food contains egg proteins.

**Let your child's caregivers know about egg allergy.** Talk to your child's babysitters, teachers, relatives or other caregivers about his or her egg allergy so that they do not accidentally give your child egg-containing products. Make sure they understand what to do in emergency.