



Early Introduction of Allergenic Foods

What are allergenic foods?

Allergenic foods are foods that have a higher risk of allergy. These include the following:

- Egg
- Milk
- Peanut
- Wheat
- Soy
- Fish
- Shellfish
- Sesame
- Tree nuts (e.g., almond, cashew, walnut, hazelnut, macadamia, pine nut)



Studies have shown that the early introduction of allergenic foods followed by regular consumption can help prevent food allergy.

When is an ideal time to introduce allergenic foods?

Complementary solids can be started between 4 and 6 months of age when your baby is developmentally ready.

Introduce **egg and peanut** to your baby once he/she has started on solids, around the **age of 6 months**.

Introduction of other allergenic foods should not be deliberately delayed. They should be **introduced alongside** other initial weaning foods (e.g., fruits, vegetables, meats).



How do I introduce the allergenic foods?

Allergenic foods should be introduced one at a time. Watch for any allergic reaction when introducing a new allergenic food for the first time. The new allergenic food can be given daily for the next two consecutive days to confirm if baby can tolerate the food. Following this, **give the food regularly** to maintain tolerance to the food.

Allergenic foods can be introduced in age-appropriate textures. The food can be made blended or mashed into a carbohydrate base (e.g., porridge or cereal). The following table shows examples of how the allergenic foods can be prepared.

Allergenic Food	Preparation Examples	To Note
Egg	• Hard-boiled egg mashed or blended into porridge or cereal. • Egg cracked into porridge and then fully cooked. • Fried omelette cut into strips.	• Egg must be fully cooked. • A whole egg can be introduced at once. Alternatively, you can introduce egg yolk before egg white as egg yolk is less likely to trigger an allergic reaction as compared to egg white.
Milk	• Cereals/baby foods that contain milk solids. • Sugar-free yogurt/yogurt melts • Standard cow's milk formula	• Fresh milk can only be introduced after 1 year of age.
Peanut Tree nuts	• Sugar and salt-free peanut butter mixed into cereals or spread on baby bites/biscuits or bread.	• Homemade nut butters can be made by blending plain roasted nuts. • Do not offer baby the whole nut as it is a choking hazard.
Wheat	• Cereals made from wheat. • Wheat containing noodles or pasta. • Bread	• Some cereals and noodles are made from rice and do not contain wheat. Check the ingredient list on the packaging to verify that it contains wheat.
Soy	• Mashed tofu • Soy milk/soy pudding	
Fish Shellfish	• Steam or added directly in porridge to cook, then mash or blend.	• Ensure fully cooked.

How do I know if my baby has a food allergy?

There are two types of allergic reactions – immediate and delayed.

+ Immediate

The mild immediate type is commonly seen and usually occurs **within 2 hours** of ingesting the food. The reactions include development of widespread redness, hives, eye and lip swelling, single episode of vomiting. Mild allergic reactions can be managed by a general practitioner or paediatrician.



Bumpy urticaria on background of flushing signifying mild allergic reaction

+ Severe immediate type allergic reaction,

also known as anaphylaxis, involves any one of the following:

- **Respiratory:** difficulty breathing, noisy breathing, voice hoarseness, tongue swelling, turning blue
- **Gut:** vomiting more than once, severe abdominal pain
- **Circulation:** turning pale, limp, drowsy or losing consciousness



Call for an ambulance (995) if any of the above occurs.

Minor redness around the mouth that improves spontaneously is most often due to skin irritation and is not an allergic reaction. Try putting some barrier creams (e.g., paraffin or moisturisers) prior to eating to protect the skin against local food irritation.

+ Delayed type allergic reactions are rare.

These typically occur more than 2 hours but within 48 hours of food ingestion. It may include persistent vomiting, diarrhea (watery, stools that can be mucoid or bloody), or a flare of pre-existing eczema.

Consistency is required for the diagnosis – the same reaction will occur with repeated ingestion of the food. See a paediatric allergist who can evaluate your baby further.



What should I do if I suspect that my baby has a food allergy?

If you suspect that your baby has a food allergy, avoid the food in the meantime and see a paediatric allergist who can evaluate your baby further. Keeping a food diary and pictures of the reaction will be helpful when seeing the doctor.



Notes

About the National University Centre for Women and Children

The National University Centre for Women and Children (NUWoC) empowers women, children, and families to lead healthier lives. It brings together the [Department of Obstetrics & Gynaecology \(O&G\)](#) and [Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children’s Medical Institute \(KTP-NUCMI\)](#) at National University Hospital, working alongside [National University Polyclinics \(NUP\)](#) to strengthen continuity of care across the community.

Supported by the National University Health System (NUHS), NUWoC delivers comprehensive medical and surgical services across the life course – from pre-conception through maternal, child, adolescent, and women’s health.

Through a generous gift from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, KTP-NUCMI has established an integrated outpatient facility offering medical, diagnostic, and rehabilitation services for children. NUWoC is Singapore’s only public specialist centre providing paediatric kidney and liver transplant programmes.

For more information about us, visit www.nuh.com.sg/NUWoC

Children’s Emergency (24-hr)

Location NUH Main Building, Zone F, Level 1

KTP-NUCMI

Location NUH Main Building, Zone E, Level 2
(Accessible via Kent Ridge Wing, Zone C, Level 2, Lift Lobby C)
Operating Hours 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)
General Enquiry +65 6772 5736
Appointment Line +65 6908 2222
Email ktpnucmi_appt@nuhs.edu.sg

9a Viva-University Children’s Cancer Centre

Location NUH Medical Centre, Zone B, Level 9
Operating Hours 8am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)
Appointment Line +65 6772 5030
Email cbccappt@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Children’s Urgent Care Clinic @ Bukit Panjang

Location Junction 10, #01-22
Operating Hours 9am – 11pm daily (including public holidays)
General Enquiry +65 6219 1538
Email childreucc@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Child Development Unit @ JMC

Location Jurong Medical Centre, Level 2
Operating Hours 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)
Appointment Line +65 6665 2530 / 2531
Email cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Child Development Unit @ Keat Hong

Location Keat Hong Community Club, #03-01
Operating Hours 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)
Appointment Line +65 6769 4537/4637
Email cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Clinic A22 NUWoC Children’s Clinic @ NTFGH

Location Ng Teng Fong General Hospital
Tower A – NTFGH Clinics, Level 2
Operating Hours 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)
Appointment Line +65 6908 2222
Email appointment@nuhs.edu.sg

Our Patient Care Institutions

National University Hospital
Ng Teng Fong General Hospital
Alexandra Hospital
Tengah General and Community Hospital (upcoming)
Jurong Community Hospital
National University Polyclinics
Jurong Medical Centre
National University Cancer Institute, Singapore
National University Heart Centre, Singapore
National University Centre for Oral Health, Singapore
NUHS Diagnostics
NUHS Pharmacy



Scan the QR code for more information on our patient care institutions.

OneNUHS Hotline: (65) 6908 2222
OneNUHS General Enquiries: contactus@nuhs.edu.sg
OneNUHS Appointments: appointment@nuhs.edu.sg
www.nuhs.edu.sg

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