Food Allergy Adverse Reactions To Foods And Food Additives

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Food Allergy Adverse Reactions To Foods And Food Additives

Food allergy is a term that refers to adverse reactions to foods that occur when the immune system reacts to food proteins. The specific proteins that cause the reaction are called allergens. Food allergies can range from mild to severe and may involve a variety of symptoms.

Common symptoms of food allergies include:

- Hives or a rash
- Itchy, swollen eyelids
- Sneezing or a runny nose
- Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Stomach pain or cramping
- Diarrhea
- Low blood pressure or other signs of anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life-threatening reaction that requires immediate medical attention. Symptoms may include:

- Swelling of the tongue, lips, or face
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing
- Low blood pressure
- Hives
- A feeling of impending doom

If you suspect you may have a food allergy, it is important to see a healthcare provider for a proper diagnosis. This may involve allergy testing, such as skin prick testing or blood testing, to determine which foods are causing the reaction.

Preventing food allergies:

- Read labels carefully and avoid foods containing the allergen.
- Bring an epinephrine auto-injector and other medications as directed.
- Carry a card identifying your allergy and medications.
- Be prepared to treat anaphylaxis if needed.

Food allergens are proteins found in various foods, such as:

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

Diagnosis:

A healthcare provider will use a combination of medical history, physical examination, and allergy testing to diagnose a food allergy. Tests may include:

- Skin prick testing
- Blood tests
- Oral food challenge

Treatment:

Treatment for food allergies typically involves avoiding the allergen. This may be easier said than done, especially if you are eating out or traveling. Medications, such as antihistamines, may be prescribed to manage symptoms.

In severe cases, epinephrine auto-injectors and epinephrine syringes are available to quickly treat anaphylaxis.

Food allergies can be challenging to manage, but with proper diagnosis and management, individuals with food allergies can lead healthy, normal lives.