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HOW TO PERFORM FOOD CHALLENGE TESTING AT HOME TO DETECT FOOD ALLERGIES

Choose the foods to be tested by reviewing your diet diary. You are more likely to be allergic to foods which you eat often. The most common foods are: milk, egg, wheat, soy, corn, and yeast.

DO NOT TEST FOODS WHICH YOU ALREADY KNOW GIVE YOU SEVERE REACTIONS SUCH AS SHORTNESS OF BREATH OR THROAT SWELLING (ANAPHYLAXIS). Peanuts and shellfish can cause anaphylaxis in some people. If you have experienced anaphylaxis from foods, do not perform oral challenge testing at home.

Completely omit the suspected food or foods from the diet for four days. You must be a good detective and read labels very carefully in order to avoid any hidden ingredients. The accuracy of the challenge test is completely dependent on the patient's ability to eliminate the test food for four days.

Eliminating the allergic food can cause uncomfortable withdrawal symptoms in food-addicted patients. You may feel tired or have vague aches and pains, leg cramps and headaches. Headache is one of the classical withdrawal symptoms. You may take the recommended "blocking" remedy for withdrawal symptoms. See attached sheet.

If you do not have any adverse symptoms with the food challenge, then you may eat the food as often as you like.

If you have adverse reactions during the food challenge testing, it means that you have successfully identified the allergic food, and therefore, should remove it from the diet for a while, and then eat the food not more often than every four to seven days. The length of time you must avoid the allergic food depends upon your symptoms. When you do not have symptoms with a food challenge, then you may eat the food again. It may take a few weeks to 6 months to lose your food sensitivity. Thereafter, you must not eat the food more often than once in 4 days in any form, or you will reactivate your food allergy. In addition to the rotational diversified diet, you may also choose to receive allergy treatment (food allergy drops) which will also eliminate food allergy symptoms.

Many patients will react to the challenge meal almost immediately, and most will do so between one to four hours. Delayed reactions may happen as long as 18 hours.

The most common reactions are: sneezing, coughing, post nasal drainage, nose blowing, headaches, tiredness, itching, change in pulse, gastrointestinal symptoms, eczema, fatigue, spaciness, hyperactivity, or emotional outburst.

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CHALLENGE TEST, DAY FIVE (5):

The food to be tested has been totally omitted from the diet for four days.

1. Eat the suspected allergic food for breakfast.
2. Prepare food for testing according to directions.
3. Eat the first dose of test food.
4. If no reactions occur, a second feeding, the size of the first portion is eaten at the end of the hour.
5. Record all symptoms, as instructed below.

RECORD SYMTOMS:

1. Do not perform test if you are symptomatic before testing.
2. List all symptoms present prior to the challenge testing.
3. Write down any other symptoms every five minutes through the first hour.
4. Record symptoms every 15 minutes during the second hour.
5. Delayed symptoms may occur up to 18 hours later. Contact the office with any delayed reaction. Record these symptoms or reactions.
6. Record sneezes, coughs, sniffing, blowing, headache, tiredness, itching, gastrointestinal symptoms, eczema, and changes in pulse.

Severe symptoms experienced during the test may be relieved by breathing oxygen, taking Alka-Seltzer Gold or unflavored Milk of Magnesia, or taking Vitamin C.

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TEST MEALS:

1. WHEAT- Two (2) servings of Cream of Wheat. Can also use puffed wheat or shredded wheat.
2. CORN – Two (2) servings of corn meal mush, lightly salted. Or corn popped in corn oil, grits, or fresh corn.
3. EGG- Three (3) hard or soft boiled eggs.
4. Milk – One (1) quart, in glass container, if possible.
5. ORANGE – Two (2) medium, whole.
6. POTATO- Two (2) large baked potatoes. Do not grease potatoes before baking.
7. BEEF- Three (3) slices roast or home ground round steak, broiled.
8. PORK- Same as beef. Cured ham is not pork.
9. CHICKEN - Two (2) servings, stewed, baked or broiled.
10. SUGAR (CANE) – Two (2) tablespoons in glass of spring water. Stir well.
11. COFFEE – Two (2) cups, black, made from patient's brand of tea.
12. TEA – Two (2) cups, made from patient's brand of tea.
13. CHOCOLATE - Eat Baker's chocolate (three one-ounce squares).
14. OTHER FRUITS – Fresh (peeled)
15. OTHER VEGETABLES – Same as other fruit.
16. BAKER'S YEAST – One (1) package of yeast (additive – free) from health food store, in glass of ice cold spring water.
17. BREWER'S YEAST – Found in health food store. Mix one tablespoon in glass of cold spring water.
18. FOOD COLORING – Use set of French's or McCormick's food colors. Mix together ½ teaspoon each color. Put one (1) teaspoon of mixture in glass of spring water, drink.
19. SOY – Tofu fried in Crisco, or margarine on rice cracker.
20. LEGUMES – Two (2) servings of beans, black-eyed peas or beans of your choice.
21. PEANUTS – Dry roasted, unsalted peanuts or peanut butter from health food store. (No sugar, salt or preservatives.)

SOURCE OF ERRORS: Errors in testing may be due to failure in complying with these instructions. READ LABEL CAREFULLY. Prepare foods without additional ingredients.

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GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR FOOD GROUPS

- MILK:** Cheese, butter, margarine, ice cream, bread, soup, cookies, candies, lunch meat and many processed foods. Appears as whey, lactose, and caseinate on some labels.
- EGG:** Custard, ice cream, salad dressing, cake, cookies, bread, pasta (macaroni, noodles), mixes and many processed foods.
- WHEAT:** Bread, cereal, cookies, crackers, pies, soups, pasta, lunch meat, hot dogs, mixes and processed foods.
- CORN:** Oil, margarine, syrup, as sweetener in dressings and juice drinks, sodas, baking powder, many sugar substitutes, non-diary creamers. Appears as Dextrose on some labels.
- SUGAR:** Candies, cereals, soft drinks, cookies, ice cream, ketchup, salad dressings, Jell-O, and processed foods.
- YEAST:** Breads, mushrooms, vinegar, pickles, vitamins, wine, dried fruits, condiments, and many stored, frozen or canned foods including fruit juices.
- CITRUS:** Orange, lemon, lime, grapefruit and all foods containing citrus fruits or citric acid.
- SOY:** Cooking oil (Wesson, Crisco), shortening, margarine, tofu crackers, cookies and many processed foods.
- PEANUT:** Peanut butter, cooking oil, snack food, cereal, cookies, cake and candy.

BE A CAREFUL LABEL READER. If IN DOUBT, LEAVE IT OUT. FOODS MOST COMMONLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALERGIC SYMPTOMS:

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PREPARATION OF FOOD FOR TEST:

1. Prepare food individually in purest form. May use a little salt. No pepper.
2. Prepare in stainless steel, cast iron, Corning Ware, or glass.
3. Use bottled water.
4. All fruits are best used raw.
5. Food from health food store will be a free from additives and preservatives as possible.
6. If fresh food is not available, use frozen food or food canned in glass.
7. Be sure no sweetener is added.

PATIENTS MAY REACT TO A FOOD IN ITS COOKED FORM BUT NOT IN ITS UNCOOKED FORM, OR VICE VERSA.