

Stress & anxiety related to food allergy



Certain life events – such as being newly diagnosed with food allergy or a recent allergic reaction – can bring about a wide range of emotions including fear, anxiety, anger, loneliness, and guilt. Acknowledging and responding to these emotions can be very helpful in managing them, and in managing your allergies.

ARE YOU newly diagnosed?

Initial anxiety with a new diagnosis is normal, and can actually be a healthy part of the process in learning to manage food allergies. It can motivate you to learn what you need to know about steps to prevent reactions and how to respond in an emergency.

Follow these helpful tips to ease anxiety:

Make a list of the questions that you have about your food allergies and how to manage them.

Seek answers from reliable sources such as your allergist, or organizations like Food Allergy Canada.

Take what you have learned and put it into action with a plan for managing allergies in various areas of your life (such as school, work, travel, dining out, and family gatherings).

As food allergy management becomes a part of daily living, you will feel more empowered, and less anxious. Talking to others who have had similar experiences (for example, other parents) can be extremely useful.

Most people find that, with time, anxieties ease.

If anxiety has become a problem for you or the person with allergies who you are caring for (such as your child), it is important to seek help from a medical professional.

FOR parents

You are a role model for your child.

Help your child to feel confident in daily life, and in managing his or her food allergies. Remember that your own emotional relationship towards allergies will influence your child. If you approach food allergies with strength and awareness, taking a "careful, not fearful" approach, you are setting an example for your child as he or she grows up and develops more independence.

- Be informed about food allergies by seeking information from reliable sources.
- Talk honestly with your child, even about tough topics.
- Work together as your child encounters new situations.
- Allow your child to take an age-appropriate role in problem-solving and to speak for themselves whenever possible (for example, having them order their own food and ask questions at a restaurant).
- Share age-appropriate resources on how to manage food allergies with your child. Download free resources and tools at foodallergycanada.ca.



It's normal to worry about having another reaction, to feel upset or angry, or to feel alone, depending on what happened.

Some children will feel fearful when they return to the place where it happened, or even start to worry that they are having another reaction. Talk about these feelings, and try to learn from your experience.

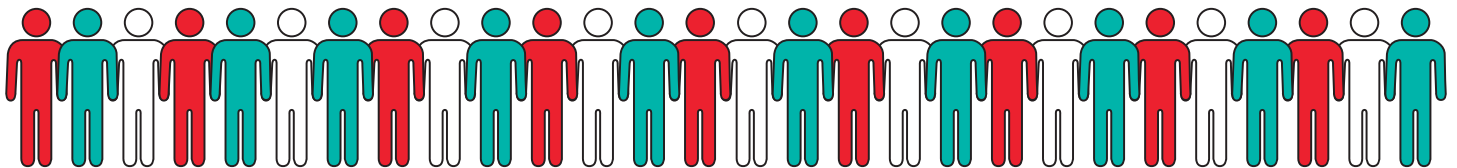
For many, life soon gets back to normal after a reaction. However, if things are not getting better – and you or your child with allergies feel very anxious – talk to your doctor about a referral to a specialist who can help with coping strategies.

WHAT TO EXPECT

after an allergic reaction

After a serious allergic reaction, there often is a period of readjustment. It can have a significant impact on you and your family as you all make sense of what happened.

The lessons you teach your child when they are young will help them to self-manage as they get older.



YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

Connect with Food Allergy Canada

We have many resources available for you to learn about how to confidently manage food allergies, no matter where you are in your food allergy journey.

For additional support, you can reach us at info@foodallergyca.ca or **1 866 785-5660**.

Find a support group in your area

Allergy support groups can provide valuable information on how other families are successfully living with allergies. They also provide a warm, caring environment for you to share your concerns.

Visit foodallergyca.ca to connect with a support group.