



Empowering you Organically - Season 6 - Episode 43

Title: How Discovering My Food Allergies Saved My Life - INSPIRED Health Journey with Cyndi in Long Island

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Guest: Cyndi in Long Island, Organixx Customer

Description: We asked and our customers responded! Tune in this week to learn about hidden food allergies and toll they take on your health. Cyndi from Long Island is sharing her story with all of us this week. Will Cyndi's story resonate with you?

Fact: Researchers estimate that 32 million Americans have food allergies, including 5.6 million children under age 18. That's one in 13 children, or roughly two in every classroom. About 40 percent of children with food allergies are allergic to more than one food.

What Is a Food Allergy?

- A food allergy is a medical condition in which exposure to a food triggers a harmful immune response. The immune response, called an allergic reaction, occurs because the immune system attacks proteins in the food that are normally harmless. The proteins that trigger the reaction are called allergens.
- The symptoms of an allergic reaction to food can range from mild (itchy mouth, a few hives) to severe (throat tightening, difficulty breathing).
- Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that is sudden in onset and can cause death.

To Which Foods Are People Allergic?

- More than 170 foods have been reported to cause allergic reactions.
- Eight major food allergens – milk, egg, peanut, tree nuts, wheat, soy, fish and crustacean shellfish – are responsible for most of the serious food allergy reactions in the United States.
- Allergy to sesame is an emerging concern.

How Many People Have Food Allergies?

- Researchers estimate that 32 million Americans have food allergies, including 5.6 million children under age 18. That's one in 13 children, or roughly two in every classroom.

- About 40 percent of children with food allergies are allergic to more than one food.

Food Allergies Are on the Rise

- The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention reports that the prevalence of food allergy in children increased by 50 percent between 1997 and 2011.
- Between 1997 and 2008, the prevalence of peanut or tree nut allergy appears to have more than tripled in U.S. children.

Food Allergy Reactions Are Serious and Can Be Life-Threatening.

- Every three minutes, a food allergy reaction sends someone to the emergency room.
- Each year in the U.S., 200,000 people require emergency medical care for allergic reactions to food.
- Childhood hospitalizations for food allergy tripled between the late 1990s and the mid-2000s.
- More than 40 percent of children with food allergies have experienced a severe allergic reaction such as anaphylaxis.
- Medical procedures to treat anaphylaxis resulting from food allergy increased by 380 percent between 2007 and 2016.

Serious Allergic Reactions Require Immediate Treatment

- Once a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) starts, the drug epinephrine is the only effective treatment.
- Epinephrine (also called adrenaline) should be injected within minutes of the onset of symptoms. More than one dose may be needed.
- Easy-to-use, spring-loaded syringes of epinephrine, called epinephrine auto-injectors, are available by prescription.
- Not treating anaphylaxis promptly with epinephrine increases the risk of a fatal reaction.

Food Allergy Impacts Quality of Life

- Food allergy limits a major life activity and may qualify an individual for protection under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- Caring for children with food allergies costs U.S. families nearly \$25 billion annually.
- About one in three children with food allergy reports being bullied as a result.
- Compared to children who do not have a medical condition, children with food allergy are twice as likely to be bullied.

Who Is at Greatest Risk?

- Compared to children who don't have food allergy, children with food allergy are two to four times as likely to have other allergic conditions, such as asthma or eczema.
- Compared to non-Hispanic white children, African American children are at significantly greater risk of developing food allergy.
- Delaying introduction of allergenic foods does not provide protection against food allergy. In fact, feeding peanut foods early and often to babies with egg allergy or eczema dramatically reduces their risk of developing peanut allergy.

- While most food allergies arise in childhood, at least 15 percent of patients with food allergies are first diagnosed in adulthood. More than one in four adults with food allergies report that all of their food allergies developed during adulthood, and nearly half of adults with food allergy report having developed at least one food allergy during adulthood.
- Approximately 20-25 percent of epinephrine administrations in schools involve individuals whose allergy was unknown at the time of the reaction.
- Severe or fatal reactions can happen at any age, but teenagers and young adults with food allergies are at the highest risk of fatal food-induced anaphylaxis.
- Individuals with food allergies who also have asthma may be at increased risk for severe or fatal food allergy reactions.
- Most fatal food allergy reactions are triggered by food consumed outside the home.
- More than 15 percent of school-aged children with food allergies have had a reaction in school.

Can Food Allergies Be Outgrown?

- Although allergies to milk, egg, wheat and soy often resolve in childhood, children appear to be outgrowing some of these allergies more slowly than in previous decades, with many children still allergic beyond age 5.
- Allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, fish and shellfish are generally lifelong.

Is There a Cure?

- There is no cure for food allergy. Food allergies are managed by avoiding the problem food(s) and learning to recognize and treat reactions symptoms.
- Food allergy therapies are under study in clinical trials, but none has been approved yet for general use.

Elimination Diet

An elimination diet, also known as exclusion diet is a diagnostic procedure used to identify foods that an individual cannot consume without adverse effects. Adverse effects may be due to food allergy, food intolerance, other physiological mechanisms, or a combination of these.

- **4 Step Process**
 - Planning – Work with practitioner to learn which foods might be causing problems.
 - Avoiding – For two weeks (at least), follow the elimination diet without any exceptions.
 - Challenging – Start challenging your body with the eliminated foods, one food group at a time.
 - Create – Based on your finding create a new eating plan for improved health and vitality.

Foods that are commonly removed during the elimination phase include:

- Citrus fruits: Avoid citrus fruits, such as oranges and grapefruits.
- Nightshade vegetables: Avoid nightshades, including tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, white potatoes, cayenne pepper and paprika.

- Nuts and seeds: Eliminate all nuts and seeds.
- Legumes: Eliminate all legumes, such as beans, lentils, peas and soy-based products.
- Starchy foods: Avoid wheat, barley, corn, spelt, rye, oats and bread. Also avoid any other gluten-containing foods.
- Meat and fish: Avoid processed meats, cold cuts, beef, chicken, pork, eggs and shellfish.
- Dairy products: Eliminate all dairy, including milk, cheese, yogurt and ice cream.
- Fats: Avoid butter, margarine, hydrogenated oils, mayonnaise and spreads.
- Beverages: Avoid alcohol, coffee, black tea, soda and other sources of caffeine.
- Spices and condiments: Avoid sauces, relish and mustard.
- Sugar and sweets: Avoid sugar (white and brown), honey, maple syrup, corn syrup and high-fructose corn syrup, agave nectar, desserts and chocolate.

If you suspect that other foods not on this list make you feel uncomfortable, it is highly recommended to remove them as well.

Deeper Dive Resources

Food Allergy Statistics & Resources:

<https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/food-allergy-101/facts-and-statistics>

What kinds of allergy tests are there?

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK367583/>

Elimination Diet PDF – Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine:

https://integrativemedicine.arizona.edu/file/11270/handout_elimination_diet_patient.pdf

Cushing Disease

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000348.htm>

