# IgE-Mediated Food Allergy



#### FAST FACTS

6%

of children under age 5 years are affected by a food allergy

## milk, egg and

**peanut** are the most common causes of allergic reactions in children

### peanut, tree nuts and

**Seafood** are the most common triggers for allergic reactions in teenagers and adults

#### WHEN TO REFER

A referral to an allergist is recommended for patients who:

- Present with concern for a food allergy
- Have a parent or sibling with a history of food allergy (families may wish to undergo allergist evaluation prior to starting allergenic foods)
- Have moderate to severe atopic dermatitis with concerns for possible food allergies

Please send any supporting medical records including PCP clinical evaluation documentation.

For more information or urgent needs, providers should contact Physician Priority Link at 1-888-636-7997. IgE-mediated food allergy is an adverse health effect from a specific immune response that occurs reproducibly with exposure to a specific food. There are nine common food allergies: cow's milk, egg, tree nut, peanut, shellfish, wheat, soy, fish and sesame.

#### ASSESSMENT

Perform a standard health history and physical. Ask about episodes of possible food allergy reactions: Which food potentially triggered the symptoms? What symptoms did the patient experience? What treatment was required at home? Ask about parent or sibling history of food allergy and history of atopic dermatitis.

#### HPE (HISTORY AND PHYSICAL EXAM) RED FLAGS

Symptoms of IgE-mediated food allergy occur reproducibly with ingestion of a specific food, usually within minutes to an hour of ingestion of the causative food.

- Anaphylaxis
- Pale or blue skin
- Dizziness
- Faintness
- Shortness of breath
- Repetitive cough
- Tight or hoarse throat

- Trouble breathing or swallowing
- Wheezing
- Onset of hives
- Angioedema; swelling of lips
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

- Additional red flags:
- History of moderate to severe atopic dermatitis which is chronic.
- Parent or sibling history of food allergy

No physical exam finding alone is diagnostic of food allergy.

#### MANAGEMENT/TREATMENT

If there is concern for an allergic reaction to an ingested food, refer to an allergist for testing and management. Skin testing or serum food-specific IgE testing for potential food allergens are performed by the allergist if indicated.

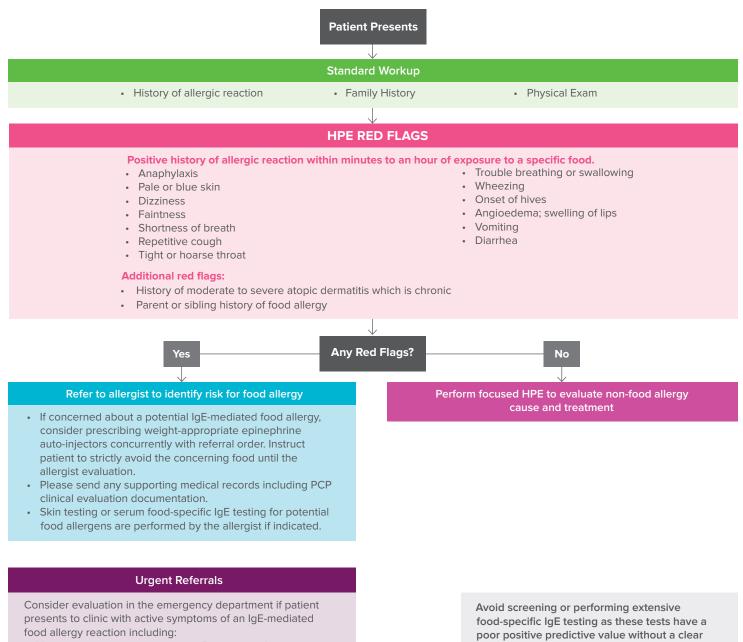
If concerned about a potential IgE-mediated food allergy, consider prescribing weight-appropriate epinephrine auto-injectors concurrently with referral order. Instruct patient to strictly avoid the concerning food until the allergist evaluation.

Avoid screening or performing extensive food-specific IgE testing as these tests have a poor positive predictive value without a clear history and can lead to unnecessary elimination diets with impacts on quality of life and nutrition. If these tests are deemed necessary, they should be directed only towards relevant possible food allergens. It is also appropriate to refer to an allergist prior to any testing by PCP.

If you would like additional copies of this tool, or would like more information, please contact the Physician Outreach and Engagement team at Cincinnati Children's.

Tool developed by Cincinnati Children's physician-hospital organization (known as Tri-State Children's Health Services, Inc.) and staff in the James M. Anderson Center for Health Systems Excellence. Developed using expert consensus and informed by Best Evidence Statements, Care Practice Guidelines, and other evidence-based documents as available. For Evidence-Based Care Guidelines and references, see www.cincinnatichildrens.org/evidence.

# IgE-Mediated Food Allergy



- Hypotension
- Respiratory distress
- Onset of hives
- Repeated vomiting

- Severe angioedema

Before sending to the ED, treat with medications including

epinephrine, Benadryl and/or albuterol as appropriate.

history and can lead to unnecessary elimination diets with impacts on quality of life and nutrition. If these tests are deemed necessary, they should be directed only towards relevant possible food allergens. It is also appropriate to refer to an allergist prior to any testing by PCP.

For urgent issues, or to speak with the specialist on call 24/7, call the Physician Priority Link at 1-888-987-7997.