

Children's Outpatient Department

Allergy - Food challenge

Food challenges involve testing if your child is still sensitive to a food in a safe, controlled way. We do this by giving your child increasing amounts of the food, starting with very small amounts.

The challenge will take place in the Medical Day Unit on Ward 16 at University Hospital, Coventry.

Parents will be responsible for bringing in the necessary food.

Observations

For the first 60 minutes of the challenge, a nurse with a paediatric life support certificate will be present. The nurse will be looking for signs of an adverse reaction. These are:

- Rash around the mouth
- Urticarial rash (itchy rash)
- Sneezing
- Vomiting
- Irritability
- Wheezing or coughing
- Loose stool



Patient Information

- Stridor (croup-like breathing)
- Collapse

After the first 60 minutes, your child will be checked every 30 minutes. We will check for signs of an adverse reaction and check your child's:

- pulse
- respiratory rate
- oxygen saturation

Stopping the challenge

If any of the signs of an adverse reaction appear, no more biscuit will be given. In the event of a rash, wheeze, stridor or more severe reaction, we will contact a doctor and the appropriate medicine will be given.

The challenge

The challenge food will be given at 20-minute intervals. We start with a tiny amount and build up to an appropriate portion size for your child.

Your child will be observed for some time after completing the challenge. This time will vary depending on if your child had a reaction or not.

You will need to stay for at least 1 hour after the challenge is completed.

We aim to give you a convenient date for your child's challenge at this outpatient appointment.

On the day of the challenge, please bring:

- The food we are testing
- A packed lunch for yourself and your child
- A favourite book, toy or schoolwork

Patient Information

Please note that we do ask a parent (with parental responsibility) to accompany their child to this appointment.

Medicines to stop before the test

Some medicines may interfere with the challenge. So, these need to be stopped for a few days before the test. **Please stop:**

- Short-acting antihistamines such as Piriton, Phenergan and Vallergran, 2 days before the test.
- Long-acting antihistamines such as Cetirizine and Loratidine, 5 days before the test

Your child can continue using all their asthma inhalers. However, if you are needing to use your blue inhaler more often, please email the allergy nurses for advice before attending your appointment.

Please speak to the allergy nurses if:

- your child is taking any other medicines
- you have any concerns
- you need clarification about the test and stopping the medicine

If the medicine cannot be stopped or you must give the medicine (like in the case of an allergic reaction), please speak to the allergy nurse. They can rearrange the challenge.

If your child has a cough, cold or high temperature, please let us know before you arrive. We may need to cancel the challenge.

More information

For more information, contact 01788 663 189. Or email: childrensallergy@uhcw.nhs.uk

Patient Information

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact childrensallergy@uhcw.nhs.uk and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke-free policy.

Did we get it right?

We would like you to tell us what you think about our services. This helps us make further improvements and recognise members of staff who provide a good service.

Have your say. Scan the QR code or visit:
www.uhcw.nhs.uk/feedback



Document History	
Department:	Paediatrics
Contact:	33189
Updated:	January 2024
Review:	January 2026
Version:	3
Reference:	HIC/LFT/2179/17