

An Explanation of Food Intolerance

What is the difference between allergy and intolerance

The term 'food intolerance' and 'food allergy' are often confused and are two very different things.

Genuine food allergy is relatively rare. Only about 2% of the adult population are affected. A food allergy is a swift response by the body's immune system to a specific food. In this type of reaction, the body's immune system mistakes a food for an 'invader' which often results in a rapid allergic reaction often within minutes, but generally within a maximum of two hours. This type of allergic reaction is commonly associated reactions to peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs and seafood.

Food intolerance is quite different to food allergy and whilst the symptoms can impact the person's quality of life they are not life threatening. Food intolerances are much more common than food allergies.

When foods and drinks are digested the proteins within them are broken down into smaller fragments for easy absorption into the body. Larger fragments can pass through without breaking down, and sometimes the body reacts by attacking them using antibodies called Immunoglobulin G's (IgG).

A recent study* has shown that those who eliminated trigger foods based on food-specific IgG test results had reductions in weight, body mass index, waist and hip circumference and improvements in all indicators of quality of life that were measured. The quality of life indicators included physical and emotional wellbeing, mental health, social life, pain levels and vitality.

*Lewis J et al, 2012: Eliminating Immunologically-Reactive Foods from the Diet and its Effect on Body Composition and Quality of Life in Overweight Persons. Journal Obesity & Weight loss Therapy 2:1

Allergy vs Intolerance

Food Intolerance	Food Allergy
Reactions up to 72 hours after eating	Immediate reactions (2 hours or less)
Multiple foods can be involved	Rarely more than 1 to 2 foods
Any organ system can be affected	Primarily skin, airways and digestive system
Very common	Trace amounts of foods can cause reactions

Food Intolerance	Food Allergy
Difficult to self-diagnose	Caused by raised IgE antibody
Symptoms can clear after avoidance (3-6 months)	Lifelong

Symptoms of food intolerance

Food intolerance is a condition with a wide range of symptoms including: including gut symptoms, bloating, migraines, low mood, weight gain, fatigue and skin problems.

- Abdominal Pain
- Aches and Pains
- Acne
- Bloating
- Constipation
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Diarrhoea
- Dizziness
- Eczema
- Fatigue
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
- Itching
- Fluid Retention
- Headaches
- Hyperactivity
- Migraine
- Nausea
- Rashes
- Rhinitis
- Sinusitis
- Stomach Cramps
- Tension
- Tiredness
- Urticaria
- Weight loss/Weight Gain
- Wheezing

Symptoms of food intolerance can take up to 72 hours to appear after eating the trigger food or group of foods. On average people who suffer from food intolerances usually have between 4 and 8 trigger foods.

Many people suffer for years, having formed a coping mechanism to deal with the symptoms but being unable to enjoy a normal work and home life. Many people don't realise that there are easy steps to take that could resolve their condition.

Lorisian can help you provide a fast track or starting point for an elimination diet to help optimise your health and wellbeing.

†Food intolerance symptoms must always be checked out by a Medical Professional. If you have seen a Medical Professional but have not been given a diagnosis for your symptoms then you may be suffering from food intolerance.