

What to do if your child has an egg allergy

Egg allergies can vary depending on the child. Some children will react to all forms of egg (well cooked, loosely cooked or raw egg), whereas other children may only be allergic to loosely cooked and raw egg but able to tolerate egg in a well-cooked form.

Labelling

To follow a totally egg free diet, both eggs and their derivatives must be avoided. Checking food labels on packaged/manufactured food is essential as egg can often be disguised.

By law, manufactures in the European Union (EU) are required to list egg in the ingredients panel of all pre-packaged foods, even if they contain the slightest amount. However, where food is sold loosely (eg at a bakery) they do not have to comply with this law, but they do have to know what allergens are in their food if questioned. It is recommended to avoid these foods if you can't be sure what they contain or if they could have traces of egg through cross contamination.

Outside of the EU the law is different and labelling can be unclear. Reading the ingredients panel is essential and foods that contain any item/s in the following list should be avoided:

- Egg
- Dried egg, egg powder, frozen egg, pasteurised egg
- Egg yolk
- Egg white
- Egg proteins (albumin, ovalbumin, globulin, ovogloulin, livetin, ovomucin)
- Lysozyme
- Egg lecithin (E322) – this is an additive found naturally in eggs. When used as a food additive it is nearly always derived from soya. In cases where you are unsure about the source, you should check with the manufacturer.

'Free from' lists

Supermarkets and manufacturers will have a list of their own brand foods that are free from allergens such as eggs. These are available free of charge, with some available online as well. Ensure you check the labels each time you buy something as ingredients can often change.

Classification of egg containing foods

It is important to know what form of egg your child is allergic to as you only need to avoid the forms they react to.

It is therefore essential that any child suffering from an egg allergy is tested under specialist supervision before foods containing eggs (such as cakes and biscuits) are given.

Egg forms in foods

Well cooked egg	Loosely cooked egg	Raw egg
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cakes • Biscuits • Dried egg pasta • Egg in sausage • Egg in prepared meat dishes • Fresh egg pasta <i>boiled for over 10 minutes</i> • Egg glaze on pastry • Sponge fingers • Quorn products • Egg in some gravy granules • Shop bought frozen Yorkshire puddings • Manufactured scotch pancakes and pancakes • Manufactured meringues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meringues • Lemon curd • Quiche • Scrambled egg • Boiled egg • Fried egg • Omelette • Poached egg • Egg in batter • Homemade products where egg is used to make breadcrumbs stick to chicken/fish • Hollandaise sauce • Egg custard • Bread and butter pudding • Homemade pancakes and Yorkshire pudding especially if they contain any sticky batter inside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh mousse • Fresh mayonnaise • Some fresh ice-cream • Some sorbet • Royal icing (both fresh and powdered icing) • Horseradish sauce • Tartar sauce • Raw egg in cake mix and other dishes awaiting cooking • Cheese containing egg white lysozyme • The fondant icing inside a Cadbury's cream egg

Egg free cooking

It isn't easy to cook certain foods without eggs, but there are many different ways you can substitute egg in homemade cooking. Egg replacers can be very useful in cooking – these come as either whole egg or egg white replacer and can be bought from pharmacies or health food shops. Some whole egg replacers are also available on prescription – we would advise you discuss this with your GP.

Available whole egg replacers	Egg white replacer
Loprofin egg replacer (SHS)	Loprofin egg white replacer (SHS)
Ener G egg replacer (General Dietary)	
No-egg (Orgran)	

Other suggestions include adapting recipes by replacing each egg with a teaspoon of baking powder or using pureed apple or pineapple or mashed banana as binding agents instead of eggs.

Vaccinations and medications

Vaccines are important to protect children from dangerous diseases. The measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccines are grown in chick cells and do not contain egg protein. Influenza (flu) nasal spray contains traces of egg protein and can be offered in an alternative form. Yellow fever vaccine and a number of medicines may contain small traces of egg protein and are recommended to be avoided. Any concerns should be discussed with your health care professional /specialist. Further details on children's flu vaccinations available from: www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/pages/child-flu-vaccine-questions-and-answers.aspx

Useful websites

www.allergyuk.org – further advice on egg allergy, details of allergy free cookbooks and recipes/tips on egg free cooking

www.leaveitout.co.uk – contains reviews for restaurants that cater for allergies

www.egglesscooking.com – ideas for egg free cooking

www.vegansociety.com – egg free recipes can be found on the Vegan Society website

www.goodnessdirect.co.uk – egg free substitute foods and egg replacers.