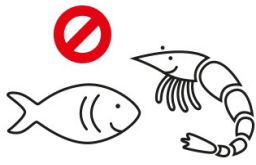


Fish and Shellfish Free Diet



Patient Name: Date:



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Introduction

People with seafood allergy may react to fish and/or shellfish. Fish allergy can occur in both children and adults. Shellfish allergy is more commonly seen in older children and adults. This may be due to the age that these foods tend to be given. Seafood allergy is usually associated with immediate symptoms which can include breathing problems, severe nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and rashes. In extreme cases, anaphylaxis, an extreme allergic reaction which can be life threatening can occur. Delayed reactions of up to 8 hours can also occur but these are usually less severe. Symptoms can sometimes be triggered by inhaling cooking vapours which can cause itching of the eyes, wheezing or worsening of asthma. Some people will have skin reactions when they handle fish without eating it. Anaphylaxis is rare with these types of exposure.

You may not be allergic to all fish and all types of shellfish, so it is important to have this allergy diagnosed correctly. Once you know what you need to avoid, your Dietitian will discuss the extent of the avoidance with you in detail. Seafood should not be avoided inappropriately as it is a good source of protein and many types of fish contain healthy oils (omega-3-fats).

Diagnosis

It is important that food allergies are diagnosed by a healthcare professional with the right training. They will ask questions about the symptoms and may perform tests. The type of tests will depend on the type of reactions the patient has.

For immediate reactions

Skin prick tests or blood tests that measure 'specific IgE antibodies' may be used to help with the diagnosis. These results can be difficult to interpret without an allergy specialist. Sometimes, a food challenge (where increasing amounts of the suspected food are given and symptoms monitored) may be needed before a diagnosis can be made. This will only be carried out in a safe hospital setting.

For delayed reactions

At present, the most reliable method for diagnosing delayed reactions is a food exclusion and reintroduction diet. This involves the removal of the suspected food(s) from the diet for a set period of time. The food is slowly re-introduced to see if it causes a reaction. This can be difficult and a registered Dietitian can help to ensure it's done safely and key nutrients aren't being left out of the diet.

Some companies offer food allergy or intolerance tests that measure 'IgG antibodies', but these are not a reliable way of diagnosing cow's milk allergy or intolerance. Other tests such as hair analysis, kinesiology testing and vega testing have also been found to be unreliable.

Checking food labels

European Union (EU) food labelling laws require that labels must clearly state whether fish and shellfish (crustaceans and molluscs), as well as other common allergens, are ingredients in a food product.

- These laws apply to all **packaged and manufactured foods and drinks sold throughout the EU**.
- Since December 2014 they also apply to **foods sold loose** (e.g. from a bakery, delicatessen butcher or café) and **foods packed for direct sale** (e.g. sandwich bars, market stall, some catering products).
- If you travel outside the EU, be aware that labelling laws are different and may not always list fish and shellfish so check ingredients carefully.

Allergens must be emphasised (e.g. in bold or highlighted) and listed in one place; usually the ingredients label.

For foods sold without packaging such as in a bakery, café or pub, allergen information has to be provided either in writing or verbally. If provided verbally, the business must be able to provide further information if requested (in the UK only).

More information on the changes can be found at:

food.gov.uk/policy-advice/allergyintol/label/

Allergy statements/boxes

Many food labels in the past have had an allergy advice statement or allergy box saying they contain a certain ingredient, however these are no longer permitted. Instead there may be a comment directing you to check the ingredients list. Only if the product does not have an ingredients list may a statement be allowed.

More information on food allergy labelling is available from NHS Choices:

<http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/food-allergy/Pages/living-with.aspx>

'May contain...' or 'Made in a factory...' labelling statements

At present there is no law to say when these statements should be used on a food product. It is very hard to decide what the risk of an allergic reaction would be with every product. As this type of labelling is used on lots of foods, it is important to discuss this with your Dietitian and get advice on the safest approach to these foods.

Allergy Alerts

Sometimes foods have to be withdrawn or recalled. There may be a risk to customers because the allergy labelling is missing, wrong or if there is any other food allergy risk. You can get these alerts from the Food Standards Agency website. It is also possible to subscribe to a free email or SMS text message alert system to receive messages when Allergy Alerts are issued.

To subscribe, go to: www.food.gov.uk/safereating/allergyintol/alerts

Alternatively, you can view product alerts online from: www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/living-with-anaphylaxis/product-alerts

Cross contamination

Cross contamination can occur whilst preparing foods. If you need to avoid traces of fish or shellfish, ensure that all work surfaces and chopping boards are well cleaned. Use separate containers where necessary and use clean utensils for serving them. High risk situations where cross contamination can occur include: barbeques, buffets, deli-counters and self-service salad bars. Pre-packed sandwiches are also a risk for cross contamination and are best avoided.

Management

What are shellfish?

Shellfish is a general name given to two types of seafood, crustaceans and molluscs. Both groups contain the allergenic protein tropomyosin and it may be necessary to avoid all items from these groups as well as products made from them. The effect of the protein is unchanged by heating, therefore both raw and cooked shellfish will cause an allergic reaction.

Crustaceans

Crab including crab sticks, Lobster, Langouste, Langoustine, Scampi, Coral, Tomalley, Crawfish, Crayfish, Ecrevisse, Shrimp, Prawns, Crevette

Molluscs

Gastropods	Bivalves	Cephalopods
Snail, Abalone, Cockle, Conch, Limpet, Winkle, Whelk, Periwinkle, Sea urchin	Clam, Cherrystone, Littleneck, Pismo, Quahog, Mussel, Oyster, Razorshell, Scallop	Octopus, Squid, Cuttlefish, Calamari

If you react to one type of shellfish in the crustacean and/or mollusc groups it is recommended that you avoid all of the shellfish from these two groups. The reason for this is that the risk of cross contamination between shellfish is usually high during cooking and food manufacturing, especially in restaurants and fish counters and similar allergens are present in both.

Unless you also have an allergy to fish, individuals with an allergy to shellfish can usually eat fish without a reaction and many people with a fish allergy can eat shellfish. However, the risk of contamination can be high, especially at fish counters in supermarkets and fishmongers and restaurants. Inform the staff at the counter of your allergy and make sure the fish is handled with a clean pair of tongs. If you are not sure of how it has been handled, it is best to avoid.

What about fish?

Fish is generally divided into oily and white fish.

Fish		
Oily Fish	White Fish	Other
Herring, Trout, Salmon, Tuna, Sardines, Anchovies, Mackerel, Pilchard, Kipper, Eel, Whitebait, Swordfish, Bloaters, Cachas, Carp, Hilsa, Jack Fish, Katla, Pangas, Sprats	Cod, Plaice, Sole, Seabass, Marlin, Haddock, Skate, Halibut, Ayr, Dogfish/Rock Salmon, Cat fish, Dover Sole, Flounder, Flying Fish, Hake, Hoki, John Dory, Kalabasu, Ling, Monk Fish, Pollack, Pomfret, Red and Grey Mullet, Red Fish, Red Snapper, Rohu, Sea Bream, Shark, Tilapia, Turbot	Caviar and Fishroe

Parvalbumin is the dominant allergen in fish and cross reactivity between fish species is high (see table below). Your Dietitian will discuss with you whether to avoid all fish or just specific fish species.



Fish	Cross-reacting species
Cod	Tuna, mackerel, herring, plaice, sole, sea bass, eel
Tuna	Cod, trout, salmon
Salmon	Sardine, mackerel, tuna
Mackerel	Anchovy, cod, salmon, herring, sardine, plaice

Foods to Avoid

Strict avoidance is necessary if you have fish and/or shellfish allergy. Unlike other allergenic foods, the vapours of fish cooking or even fresh fish on an open counter can trigger allergic reactions in very sensitive people. It is important to discuss your level of sensitivity with your Dietitian, who can advise you on appropriate strategies on avoidance.

Some of the names listed above may not be familiar to you but they are included because you may come across them when you go abroad or eat out in restaurants.

The following table gives examples of foods that contain fish/shellfish. Please note this is not an exhaustive list - always check labels.

 Foods that may contain fish/shellfish	 Food to avoid
Dishes Surimi - this is often on pizzas	Paella Bouillabaisse Gumbo Frito misto
Crustaceans Chinese and Japanese foods	Shrimp paste Fruits de Mer (French)
Molluscs Fish soup/stew	Oyster sauce
Fish Worcestershire sauce often has anchovies Caesar Salad often contains anchovies Scampi may contain monk fish	Fish sauces Aspic (savoury jelly used for glazing) Caponata (Sicilian Relish) Patum peperium (Gentleman's Relish) - contains anchovies Fish soup/stew

The following is a list of shellfish names in some different languages:

Shellfish	French	German	Spanish	Italian
Lobster	Langouste	Hummer	Bogavanta/langosta	Astice
Shrimp	Crevette	Garnele	Gamba/camarón	Gamberetto
Clam	Palourde/ praire	Muschel	Almeja	Vongola
Mussel	Moule	Muschel (n)	Mejillón	Cozza
Crab	Crabe	Krebs	Cangrejo	Granchio
Scallop	Festonner/ Feston/noix	Kammuschel	Concha de per/ Vieira/zamburiña/ guisar al gratén	Cappesante
Prawn	Crevette	Krabbe	Cigala/langostino/ Gamba rosada	Gambero
Oyster	Huitre/ecailler	Auster	Ostra	Ostrica

Products containing fish/shellfish

Constituents of shellfish can be hidden in supplements or other non-food products

- Chitin is a derivative of crustaceans. It is used in skincare products, hair conditioners, hair thickener and some shampoos and may cause contact reactions.
- Shellfish may also be used in products such as beer and wine, vitamin supplements, perfumes, cosmetics, glue, washing-up liquid and fish food.
- Glucosamine, (often used by patients with osteoarthritis) has traces of shellfish skeleton (usually shrimps). Some recent evidence suggests that it is tolerated by people with shellfish allergy but it may be safer to choose a vegetarian or vegan supplement. Chondroitin may be used as a suitable alternative.
- It is rare to react to a fish oil supplement, but better to check with your dietitian which one can be used. Vitamin D may also be derived from fish oil.

These products may cause an allergic reaction in very sensitive individuals, however if you have a reaction and are unsure of the cause it is important to check the ingredients list on the labels of these products for sources of hidden shellfish.

Eating out

Depending on your (or your child's) reactions, particularly if they are quite severe, you may find some of these tips useful.

- Check out the restaurant's website – many now contain nutritional and allergy information.
- If you are allergic to fish vapours then you will need to avoid seafood restaurants
- Ring the restaurant in advance to ask if they can cater for your (or your child's) food allergy. Try to call at off-peak times when the staff will have more time to deal with your query.
- Get to know your favourite restaurant and chef.
- Speak to your waiter/waitress or the chef on arrival to check they are all aware of your (or your child's) food allergy. You may find it helpful to use a 'chef card' such as those available to buy from www.dietarycard.co.uk. Hand the card to your waiter/waitress for them to pass to the chef. Ask them to confirm that the food you have asked for has not had any contact with fish/shellfish or products that contain fish/shellfish.
- Avoiding the busiest meal times may help to give staff more time to check ingredients properly.
- If in doubt, choose to go elsewhere.
- Keep to "simple" foods on the menu. Sauces and gravies contain many ingredients which cannot always be remembered by staff.
- Remember fish/shellfish may not be mentioned in the description of a dish – check for hidden sources.
- If you do not understand the menu item, it is better not to order it.
- In self-service areas be aware of the risk of cross-contamination.
- Make sure those you are dining with know about your (or your child's) allergies and know what to do if a reaction happens.
- Carry any rescue medication with you, as recommended by your Doctor and make sure it is not out of date.
- If eating with friends or at a party, remember to discuss your (or your child's) fish/shellfish free diet with the host in advance. Discuss foods which are allowed and those which must be avoided.
- At children's parties it may be helpful to take suitable foods yourself. If you will not be staying with your child, remember to explain how serious his/ her allergic reaction is and how to deal with it.

Travel tips

Depending on your reactions, particularly if they are quite severe, you may find some of these tips useful.

- If you are travelling abroad, check in advance how to describe your allergies in the local language. There are several websites that provide useful phrases and eating out translation cards in a variety of languages: www.allergyfreepassport.com and www.yellowcross.co.uk
- If you are flying, speak to your airline well in advance to check if they can meet your (or your child's) dietary needs. Make yourself known to the flight crew to ensure the correct meal is received - and ask for an ingredient list of the meals provided.
- If you react to vapours of seafood, it is important to share this information with the airline/travel agency prior to your departure.
- Consider taking suitable snacks for the journey in case your flight is delayed or your meal is not available on the day of travel. Try to obtain a letter from your Doctor or Dietitian explaining why you need to take special food items. Any special food items not needed for the flight should be put in your suitcase. Do not take fruit, vegetables or meat as these are not allowed abroad.
- Check with the airline if they have any restrictions on the amount of liquid you can take on board.
- Some airlines require a letter from the Doctor/Dietitian allowing you to take more than a 100 ml of liquid, antihistamine etc.
- If you are taking an adrenaline autoinjector, obtain a letter from your Doctor that confirms your (or your child's) allergy.
- Carry your (or your child's) rescue medication e.g. antihistamines, adrenaline autoinjector and action plan with you and make sure they are not out of date.
- Make sure the friends you're travelling with know about your (or your child's) allergies and what to do if a reaction occurs.
- If you are staying in a hotel, try to get a room with a kitchen in case there are no safe places to eat out.
- Make sure you have the telephone number of the local hospital or emergency services and keep your medical insurance number handy in case you need it.
- Ensure you wear a medical ID bracelet or card. ID cards, bracelets and travel containers to protect medicines from excessive heat or cold are available from: www.medicalert.co.uk, www.sostalisman.com, www.yellowcross.co.uk and www.friouk.com.

Useful websites

Patient Support

- www.anaphylaxis.org.uk : A charity organisation providing information and support for people with severe allergies including information about adrenaline auto-injectors. **Tel: 01252 542 029**
- www.allergyuk.org : A charity organisation providing information for people with allergies. **Tel: 01322 619 898.**
- www.nhs.uk/conditions/food-allergy : NHS choices allergy and intolerance advice.
- www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis : NHS choices anaphylaxis advice.
- www.bda.uk.com : The British Dietetic Association provides fact sheets on food allergy & intolerance, autistic spectrum & allergy testing. **Tel: 0121 200 8080**

Online Shopping

- www.goodnessdirect.co.uk : Gluten free, wheat free, dairy free and other speciality foods. Also free from recipes for bread, pizza and snacks. Deliver to your door, orders over £35 delivery is free. Email: info@goodnessdirect.co.uk **Tel: 0871 871 6611**
- www.ilumiworld.com : Allergy free ready meals.

Online Product finder service

- www.foodmaestro.me and www.spoon.guru: these apps help you to find 'free from' products. With these apps you can:
 - filter products by ingredients you want to avoid
 - find products with ingredients you want to include
 - discover allergen information on each ingredient
 - create personal shopping lists
 - access suitable recipes

Notes:

Dietitian: **Date:****Contact Number:**

This diet sheet has been developed and peer reviewed by the Dietitians of the Food Allergy Specialist Group (FASG) of The British Dietetic Association (BDA) and is intended for use by BDA Registered Dietitians only. Content is based on expert opinion and available published literature at the time of publication. It is not a substitute for professional advice, should be used to aid a dietetic consultation and may be individualised where appropriate. The websites provided in this diet sheet are not reviewed or endorsed by FASG or the BDA. To find out if your Dietitian is registered you can access www.hpc-uk.org. The FASG and BDA will not be liable for inappropriate use of this diet sheet. This diet sheet and others are available to download free of charge by Dietitians who are members of the BDA at www.bda.uk.com.

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