

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ALLERGY NETWORK (CYANS)

Patient information leaflet **Egg Allergy**

NOTE

This document has been prepared by Public Services Delivery Scotland (PSD Scotland) on behalf of CYANS. Accountable to Scottish Government, PSD Scotland works at the heart of the health service providing national strategic services to the rest of NHS Scotland and other public sector organisations to help them deliver their services more efficiently and effectively. The CYANS Network is a collaboration of stakeholders involved in care of patients with allergies, who are supported by a PSD Scotland Programme Team to drive improvement across the care pathway.

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Contents

Avoiding egg	3
Food labels.....	3
Examples of food labels	3
Examples of egg containing foods	4
Breastfeeding	5
Non-food items containing egg.....	5
Egg free substitute foods.....	6
Egg-free baking / egg substitutes for baking	6
Building tolerance.....	7
Egg allergy and vaccination	7
Important information	8
Eating out.....	8
Travel	8
School / Nursery.....	8
Allergy testing.....	9
Further support.....	9

Avoiding egg

It can be easy to avoid egg when it's served on its own and looks like egg for example boiled, scrambled or an omelette. Egg is found as an ingredient in prepared / manufactured food, so you need to read food labels carefully.

Products such as cakes, pasta, desserts, meat products, Quorn™, salad dressings, glazes, battered and bread crumbed foods, ice cream, chocolates and sweets all need to be checked.

Food labels

In the UK, food manufacturers/businesses must inform you under food law if they use any of the 14 most common allergens (something that can cause an allergy).

These include egg as an ingredient in all food and drink they make or provide. If egg is used as an ingredient, it will be shown on the label in **bold**, *italics*, coloured type or underlined.

You should always check the ingredients list each time you buy food or drink as manufacturers may change their product ingredients. You should avoid packets where the label states the food contains any of the following:

- fresh egg: whole egg, egg yolk and/or white (including hen, duck, quail, and other birds)
- processed egg, for example powdered, dried, pasteurised, and frozen egg protein(s) for example albumen, ovalbumen, globulin, ovoglobulin, livetin, ovomucin, ovovitellin and vitellin
- E322 or Egg Lecithin

Note - some foods contain E322 soya lecithin which is NOT an egg product and is permitted.

Examples of food labels

These oatcakes are suitable in an egg free diet.

1. cheese **oat** cakes - Wholegrain **oats (71%)**, **cheese (15%)** (milk)
sustainable palm fruit oil, sea salt, raising agent: sodium bicarbonate.

This ice cream is not suitable in an egg free diet.

2. ice cream - cream (**milk**), **water**, **sugar**, **condensed skimmed** milk, glucose syrup, free range **egg** yolk, coconut oil, whole **milk** powder, **egg** white, vanilla extract, stabilisers (guar gum, pectin, carrageenan) **milk** fat, emulsifier (**soy** lecithin).

Examples of egg containing foods

Note – the following list of foods may not always contain egg, but they often do.

Vegan products are egg-free, but this is not a legal definition under labelling law.

Well cooked egg
• cakes • biscuits • dried egg pasta • shop bought pancakes • sausages, both vegetarian and meat varieties • processed meats such as burgers, prepared meat dishes • well-cooked fresh egg pasta • Quorn™ (except vegan variety) • sponges and sponge fingers • nougat and chocolate bars which contain nougat e.g., Milky Way™ or Mars Bar™ or Crème Egg™, some soft centred chocolates • Chewitts™ • gravy granules • dried egg noodles • waffles • shop bought marzipan

Lightly cooked egg
• scrambled egg • boiled egg • fried egg • omelette • poached egg • egg fried rice • meringues • non-vegan marshmallow • Tunnocks Teacakes™ • lemon curd • quiche • homemade Pancakes • batter • breadcrumb, for example fish fingers, chicken nuggets

- hollandaise sauce
- quiche and flans (fruity and savoury)
- egg custard and egg custard tarts
- crème caramel
- crème brûlée
- fresh and tinned custard
- Yorkshire pudding (some who can eat well-cooked egg can tolerate these, but it depends on how well cooked they are and if they contain any 'sticky' batter inside)
- tempura batter

Raw egg

- fresh and shop bought mayonnaise
- fresh mousse and shop-bought mousse which contains egg
- ice cream, for example Ben and Jerry's cookie dough™
- sorbet
- royal icing (both fresh and bought)
- home-made marzipan
- raw egg in batter, cake mixes and other dishes before cooking
- raw egg glaze on pastry
- horseradish sauce
- tartar sauce
- salad cream
- other dipping sauces

Breastfeeding

Small amounts of egg protein may pass through breast milk to a baby. If you're a breast-feeding mother and egg is present in your diet and tolerated by your baby, there's **no need** to remove egg from your diet.

If you've taken part in an egg challenge that shows your baby has reproducible or repeated symptoms when egg is present in the maternal diet while breast feeding, you should remove egg from your diet.

Please speak to your allergy health professional if you need further advice.

Non-food items containing egg

By law, non-food items, for example, medication, skin creams, cosmetics, toiletries will also include a list of ingredients on the packaging.

The words to look for are **OVUM or OVO**. Most people with egg allergy however do not have any issue with non-food items even if they do contain egg and you should only avoid them if they cause symptoms.

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Egg free substitute foods

Egg free egg substitutes are ingredients that can replace eggs in baking and cooking.

You can sometimes get lists of 'egg free' foods directly from food manufacturers and supermarkets, or you can download lists from their websites.

For example:

- egg-free mayonnaise, such as, Granovita Mayola™ or Plamil™ mayonnaise
- egg-free omelette mix, such as, Allergycare™

Also, vegan recipes are all egg-free.

Egg-free baking / egg substitutes for baking

You can adapt your own cake recipes by either:

1. using homemade egg replacers as follows:

These are all equal to one egg:

- 2 tablespoons water, 1 teaspoon vegetable oil and 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ cup carbonated water
- ¼ cup mashed banana
- ¼ cup unsweetened apple sauce
- 3 tablespoons of Aquafaba (the **residue** liquid from a tin of chickpeas)

or

2. using shop bought egg replacers available from larger supermarkets and health food shops. These include:

- Orgran™ - no-egg replacer
- Allergycare™ - vegan whole egg replacer
- Ener-G™ - egg replacer
- Loprofin™ - egg replacer (Nutricia)
- OGGS™ - aquafaba egg substitute

Building tolerance

Some children with an egg allergy will be able to eat well cooked or 'hidden' egg as an ingredient, or within a recipe and only develop symptoms if lightly cooked or raw egg is eaten. This is because heating or cooking egg changes the egg protein structure, making it less likely to cause allergic symptoms.

Where a child has had a mild to moderate reaction to raw or lightly cooked your health professional may advise you to continue eating well cooked egg if this has not been a problem.

Where a child has had a mild to moderate reaction to egg, your health professional may advise introducing well cooked egg back into their diet at home when 6 months or more have elapsed since their last reaction.

If there is a history of a severe reaction (anaphylaxis), egg in any form should not be given, until advised by your allergy health professional after allergy testing.

You must ask and confirm with your clinical team before you begin to reintroduce egg into you or your child's diet.

Egg allergy and vaccination

Can my child have their routine immunisations?

All children with egg allergy should receive their normal childhood immunisations, including the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine and nasal influenza vaccine in the usual way, with standard precautions.

The only exception is children who have had severe anaphylaxis to egg requiring admission to intensive care. These children should get nasal influenza vaccine in hospital as there is not enough information to say whether it is safe or not.

Sometimes children can't have the nasal influenza vaccine, in which case they may be offered the injectable influenza vaccine. Some of the available injectable influenza vaccines contain egg so an egg-free brand should be used, or else a brand that contains the minimum amount of egg.

Some special travel vaccines contain egg, for example Yellow fever, Rabies, tick borne encephalitis vaccine. You should talk to an allergy specialist before having one of these vaccines.

For more information, please visit the BSACI website at [bsaci.org/](https://www.bsaci.org/)

Important information

- it's essential to check food labels, even if you've bought the product before, as ingredients can change without warning
- always ask staff about the ingredients when eating food bought in a restaurant or takeaway
- remember that the names of some foods and sauces can be different in different countries, even English-speaking ones, for example the United States of America (USA)
- check medicines, toiletries, beauty products and laundry products
- beware of handling foods known to cause allergy in their dried form, for example for crafts, shakers and collages

Eating out

Café, restaurant or take away food can cause problems for people with a food allergy. Food businesses must be able to supply information about any food they sell which contains egg. This information does not necessarily have to be printed on a menu, but they do have to be able to give you the necessary information if you ask. They can't just say "None of our food is suitable" or "This dish might have nuts in it". To make eating out easier, always plan ahead and discuss allergies before you arrive, and always ask staff directly (ideally the cook themselves) whether they can provide a safe meal. Further advice is at the [CYANS website](#).

Travel

Travelling when you have a food allergy can also cause problems. Shops and restaurants may be unfamiliar. Foods that look familiar may have different ingredients (even when the brand is the same). The names for foods in different languages can be confusing.

To make travel easier, always plan ahead and discuss allergies before you leave home, with both airlines and hotels, think about how you will deal with a foreign language, bring safe foods with you and make sure you always have your allergy plan and allergy medicines with you everywhere you go. Further advice is at the [CYANS website](#).

School / Nursery

Leaving your child in the care of another person, whether that is a family member or a nursery/school, can feel scary. Most of the time they will be happy to work with you to keep your child safe, which should include the details of what they can and can't eat, what an allergic reaction might look like and how to manage it (including having an allergy plan and allergy medicines).

Most local authorities will ask for information from your health care professional about the allergy or allergies. You should aim to have a discussion with the carer, nursery or school before their first day.

You should encourage your child to ask about what they are eating and tell people about their allergy or allergies from an early age, especially if they are likely to be allergic their whole life. This is especially important for when they are not in your care but with others, or in nursery/school. Even places that declare themselves “nut-free” cannot guarantee that a teacher, parent or other child will not accidentally bring something into school that your child is allergic to, and this may just give everyone a false sense of security.

Further advice is at the [CYANS website](#).

Allergy testing

Allergy blood or skin tests can help confirm allergy.

Tests sold or marketed as “intolerance” tests are not useful in confirming allergy. See [the CYANS website](#) for further details about allergy tests.

Testing can also help confirm whether a child is growing out of their allergy or not – this is unusual but possible.

Further support

A dietitian can help advise on nutrition and food safety skills, including reading ingredient labels, shopping, and eating out.

Some children with food allergies can become very fussy. Eating the same foods all the time might sound like a good way to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction, but it can give a false sense of security, and it’s better for a child to learn good food safety skills, to try new foods and enjoy a range of different foods.

If you require further information, please contact nss.cyans@nhs.scot

If you need this leaflet in another format, please contact psd.contact-us@nhs.scot 0131 275 6000

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