

BRANFORD PEDIATRICS & ALLERGY, P.C.

Joan Alfiero, PA-C
Asthma Educator

GARY R. WANERKA, M.D.
Diplomate, American Board of Pediatrics
Diplomate, American Board of Allergy & Immunology

Christen Crowley, RN

784 East Main Street Branford, Connecticut 06405 TELEPHONE 203-481-0566 FAX 203-315-2712

FOOD CHALLENGE

You have been advised to bring your child in for a food challenge. Please make sure recent testing (usually lab work) has been done ahead of time and medical personnel in the allergy department have reviewed the results with you and the food challenge has been found as the appropriate next step.

This appointment may run 2 ½ to 3 ½ hours long so please plan accordingly and bring things for your child to do. We will slowly feed the food to your child in increasing increments over the course of an hour or more, monitoring for any sign of reaction. At the end of the hour, the food will be taken away, and your child will be monitored for another hour. At the time a food challenge is advised, the risk of reaction is very low; however, if a reaction does occur (this may be anything from hives to respiratory symptoms of cough or wheeze), we have both Benadryl and epinephrine available.

What foods to bring:

Egg challenge: scrambled and/or boiled egg. We also have egg protein powder available for children who refuse the egg. This can be added to a favorite food such as applesauce, yogurt, or pudding, which you should also bring with you.

Milk challenge: cow's milk formula for infants. For older children: milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, or several of these items.

Note: we may ask for **baked goods challenge** with either baked egg or baked milk product. This would include cookies, muffins, or other baked goods.

Peanut or Tree nut challenges: we try to have a variety of nuts in the office, however you may want to bring your own or some other type of tree nut butter (ie. almond butter, cashew butter or nutella) as indicated. Also we advise bringing candy with the nut in it (ie. peanut butter cups or peanut M+Ms for peanut challenge or almond Hershey's bar for almond challenge) as some children will not eat the actual nut but will eat the candy! We also have Bamba (a peanut snack) for infants.

Soy challenge: there are many foods that have soy as an ingredient in it that can be brought, especially snack foods. Also, soymilk, soy yogurt (make sure there is no milk ingredient if your child is milk allergic) or soy cheese are good options.

Fish/Shellfish challenge: this should be discussed ahead of time as you should bring the type (or sometimes several types) of fish or shellfish your child reacted to or tested positive to.

Passing the Challenge:

Once your child has passed the challenge and leaves the office, he or she should avoid the food for the rest of the day and be monitored for any signs or symptoms of possible delayed reaction such as abdominal symptoms or rash. If no symptoms arise, your child may begin eating the food the next day.

There is no need to continue to carry a self-injectable epinephrine, or have one at school; however, many parents continue to carry one for awhile longer until they are comfortable that the child is eating the food regularly without difficulty.

In order to maintain the allergy-free status, the food should be eaten at least once weekly. If the food is not eaten at all, your child may again develop allergy over time.

Insurance Information:

We suggest that you contact your insurance company to discuss the food challenge appointment in order to determine your coverage and charges you may incur. The fees for this appointment include one for a food challenge (CPT code 95076 with a possible additional code of 95079), as well as for an office visit (CPT code 99212, 99213, 99214 or 99215). Exactly which codes are used depends upon the details of the appointment, what occurs during the visit, and how long it takes. You will be responsible for any charges that your insurance company does not cover.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 203-481-0566.