

What's Causing the Rise in Fruit and Vegetable Allergies?

Fruits and vegetables are typically considered to be very healthy foods, not to mention essential for optimal health, so what could be causing this dramatic rise in allergic reactions to them?

According to Dr Adam Fox, a consultant pediatric allergist at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital in London, there appears to be a cross-reactivity between the proteins in pollen, such as birch, and certain fruits, such as apples and pears. So if you're allergic to pollen, you may be more prone to develop allergies to certain foods as well.

Other specialists agree with this hypothesis, adding that [particles from diesel exhaust](#) may be exacerbating the problem by making pollen even more allergenic.

Another possibility is the increase in [genetically modified fruits and vegetables](#). No one knows the full extent of what happens to the end product when you splice in new genes, and then eat that product for several years, or generations.

The only thing that is guaranteed is that it will create surprise side effects, and perhaps the radical rise in food allergies we're now seeing is only the beginning...

One thing we do know is that between 1994 and 2001 -- the same time that GMO's flooded the market -- food related illnesses DOUBLED.

GMO foods can be:

- Allergenic
- Toxic
- Carcinogenic
- Anti-nutritional

GMO's may also create brand new [diseases that we've never seen before](#), in addition to spurring on the disease rate of some we already have, such as cancer.

Multiple Allergies Also on the Rise

Specialists are also reporting a significant rise in the number of people suffering from several allergies at once. Allergic symptoms are also becoming more severe, causing acute pain, and in some cases even death.

In another recent [BBC article](#), Dr. Jonathan North, a consultant immunologist in Birmingham, stated that allergy cases in the UK have risen from 15 percent of the population to closer to 40 percent.

In the U.S., an estimated [55 percent of the population test positive to one or more allergens!](#)

Many specialists believe the rise in [eczema](#) is a significant contributing factor to the allergy epidemic – a sort of “gateway” that can enable other allergies to develop. The broken, scaly skin that is a major symptom of eczema can allow other allergens to enter your body, prompting your immune system to react to it as an enemy invader.

However, eczema can also be *caused* by food allergies, so if you suffer from eczema, you may also have a hidden food allergy or sensitivity. For simple, effective strategies that can help you get this common skin condition under control, please review my recent [article](#) on this topic.

Airborne fungal spores released from mold, which are common in the air you breathe daily, can also increase your risk of multiple allergies according to a [study](#) by University of Cincinnati researchers.

Since molds can grow on any moist surface in your home, the high humidity of the summer season signals increased mold growth, and potentially more health problems for your entire family.

Along with obvious places such as shower stalls, air conditioners and damp basements, there can be many hidden sources of mold in your home. Particularly if you have had plumbing problems or leaks in your roof, mold may grow and release spores from places such as drywall, carpet or padding, even wood.

Mold spores are very difficult to destroy, even with cleaning agents such as hot water or bleach (which is itself toxic). The best way to reduce the problem is through smart preventive measures. Hands-down, the most effective and simple overall solution to fight all the sources of mold in your home is to use a superior-quality air purifier.

How to Figure Out What Foods You're Allergic to

One of the easiest and most powerful actions you can take if you believe you are suffering from a food allergy is to do a diet elimination challenge. Simply remove all foods that contain what you believe you are allergic to and see if your

symptoms improve over the next few days. You may need to go as long as five days to give it a full trial.

If the symptoms disappear in one day, of course you have your answer. The real clincher, though, is to reintroduce the food or drink (on an empty stomach). If the suspected food is the culprit you will generally be able to feel the symptoms return within an hour.

This can be difficult if you eat a lot of processed foods, as these often contain "hidden" ingredients like corn, milk, soy, wheat, yeast and artificial additives that are often problematic. The most suspect foods will be those eaten daily or more than once a week, as well as foods that you crave or eat at night.

In extreme cases where it is difficult to isolate the offending food, you may even need to go on a fast to see if your symptoms resolve.

Remember, you can also be sensitive to food *additives* like artificial colors, preservatives and flavor enhancers (MSG), so avoiding processed foods can also help. And, although the jury is still out on the health effects of [cloned foods](#), I am willing to bet they're not without ramifications.

Why it is Vital to Address Your Food Allergies

It's important to realize that if you don't take measures to address your food allergies, you can end up with permanent, long-term damage. Allergies can put constant and unnecessary stress on your immune system that will weaken it over time, possibly leading to chronic or degenerative disease.

Once you've identified the foods you are allergic to, you will want to avoid them as much as possible. Your symptoms will likely disappear or improve once you reduce your exposure.

In terms of food sensitivities, a comprehensive nutritional approach is vital, and most people's sensitivities dramatically improve when they follow my [nutrition plan](#). This includes avoiding sugar, fruit juices, most grains, [pasteurized dairy](#) products, and [wheat gluten](#).

Making sure you're getting enough high quality animal-based omega-3 fats can also be helpful. I recommend [krill oil](#) as an optimal source of healthy omega-3s. Adding "good bacteria" to your gut by taking a high quality probiotic can also be beneficial when dealing with food sensitivities and allergies.

