



## Preparing your child for an Oral Food Challenge

### Food Challenge Details

- **How long will I be there?:** Most oral food challenges take about three hours – They generally start at 8:55 A.M or 1:25 P.M. If your child has a reaction (especially if this reaction happens during the final dose of the test), he or she may need to be watched in the clinic longer, and in rare cases, may be admitted to the hospital for observation
- **How should I prepare for the day?** You should make arrangements for you and your child to be at the clinic for possibly a whole day. This includes making arrangements for you to miss work, and for your child to miss school and any after-school activities. It is recommended that children avoid exercise the day of their oral food challenge. We recommend having someone else care for your other children and/or take care of your other responsibilities on that day
- **What medications should I avoid?** Do not give your child any antihistamine for **FOUR** days before the test (Examples include: Benadryl, Claritin, Reactine, or Aleris)
- **What medications can my child continue to take?** Asthma medications (e.g., puffers), nasal sprays, creams for eczema, and/or medications not considered antihistamines, are **okay to continue**

### Your Child's Health

On the day of the food challenge, your child must be absolutely healthy. In order to make sure your child has the best chance of success, he or she must be free from any illness for at least a week before the food challenge or the food challenge may need to be re-scheduled. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child's Allergist. If your child has **asthma, rhinitis, or eczema**, their condition must be well-controlled, and not in the middle of a flare-up

### What to Bring on the day of your child's Food Challenge

1. **Food to be challenged:** You and your Allergist will collaborate and decide what food to bring. You are responsible for bringing the food to be challenged. Only one food can be tested on a specific day
2. **Things for you & your child to do:** Bring things to entertain or distract your child. Examples include: Comforting items, coloring books, board games, electronic devices, or toys. Wifi is available at a cost
3. **Snacks:** Your child may become hungry throughout the visit. You are free to bring snacks for them to eat during or after the challenge - as long as it is a food they have eaten in the past safely, with no reactions. We would ask that you bring snacks that are **peanut & tree nut-free**, for the safety of other food allergic children in the clinic that day. Bring lots of water! – Especially if the food they will be eating is dry (For example, peanuts or tree-nuts)
4. **Epinephrine Autoinjectors:** Bring at least **2**

## What to Expect on the day of the Food Challenge

Although food challenge protocols may vary, you and your child will generally experience the following:

- **A thorough health assessment** – We begin the appointment with a review of your child’s health and perform a physical exam to ensure that your child is safe to proceed with a food challenge, and address any health concerns you or your child may have
- **Skin testing** - We will likely repeat skin prick testing to the food being challenged before starting the challenge, as an extra precaution
- **Increasing doses of food** – We begin the food challenge with a very small amount of the allergen, and double the amount every 10-15 minutes until the prescribed full serving is reached. If your child experiences any symptoms suggestive of a reaction to the food at any point during the challenge, the food challenge will be promptly stopped and your child will be assessed and monitored
- **Supervision** – The challenge will be conducted by a Nurse Practitioner or Physician with expertise in performing and managing food challenges. You may be with another family undergoing a challenge at the same time. Someone on the team will be nearby at all times. Emergency medications will be readily available if needed
- **Some anxiety is normal!** – We will make the best effort to make sure your child is aware of what is happening, and what they are eating that day. Both you and your child may experience anxiety. This is completely understandable and very common. We will work together to do our best to encourage your child to eat the food. However, we will not force your child. If the child refuses to eat the food, your Allergist will provide you with guidance on what to do next
- **“I don’t like it!”** - The food being tested may be mixed with another food that is known to be safe for your child in order to make it taste better. It is your responsibility to bring safe snacks for your child
- **What happens afterwards?** If your child has passed the oral food challenge, it is highly recommended that your child continue to eat that food on a regular basis to maintain tolerance, at least 2-3 times per week. Your child’s Allergist will provide further guidance and education at the end of the appointment

### Notes

<b>Child’s Name:</b> _____
<b>Age:</b> _____
<b>Date of visit:</b> _____
<b>Oral Food Challenge</b>
<b>Date(s):</b> _____
<b>Identified</b>
<b>food(s):</b> _____
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_____
<b>Physician:</b> _____

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