

THINK **act** be healthy



What is an Allergy?

Allergies occur when the immune system becomes unusually sensitive and overreacts to common substances that are normally harmless, such as pollens, molds, dust or food. Genetics plays a role since allergies tend to run in families. Allergy develops when exposure to certain substances leads to sensitivity. These substances that cause allergic reactions are called allergens.



Depending on the individual and the particular allergen, allergy symptoms can occur in the upper and lower respiratory tracts, the skin, digestive system and other organs. Each individual is different. For example in the case of cat allergy, one person might have symptoms affecting the nose while another might have wheezing in the chest.

Once sensitization occurs, avoidance of allergens is the best way to prevent symptoms.

Your PROfile Pharmacist will be happy to answer any questions you may have about allergy management strategies, including the use of antihistamines.

www.aaia.ca/en/aboutAllergy.htm

Food for Thought... Sobeys Dietitians Have a World of Healthy Ideas for You

Food Allergy or Food Intolerance?

If eating a particular food causes you problems, you may think you are allergic to that food. However, your problem might not be a food allergy at all - it could be a food intolerance.

Food Allergy - The immune system incorrectly identifies a food as a threat, and it reacts by making antibodies to fight it off. These antibodies cause a reaction in your body that can range from mild to a life-threatening condition called anaphylaxis. You should avoid that food completely and carry an epinephrine autoinjector at all times. The eight foods responsible for over 90% of food allergies are eggs, milk, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, sesame, seafood, and soy.

Food Intolerance - The gastrointestinal system has a problem digesting a food. Common symptoms of a food intolerance include bloating, gas, and diarrhea. You can reduce your symptoms by reducing the amount of the food you eat or finding a substitute. Common food intolerances are to dairy products (lactose) and gluten (celiac disease).

Your PROfile Pharmacist has many health education resources and is always available to discuss your health concerns!



Body & Mind

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<http://healing.about.com/od/colortherapy>

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