

How should you manage a reaction?

A written management plan will be provided, and appropriate medication prescribed which should be always available.

If a legume is accidentally eaten spit the food out straight away and give an antihistamine as soon as possible.

Severe symptoms:

- Difficulty breathing (wheezing, noisy breathing)
- Swelling in the throat (noisy breathing, hoarse voice, drooling)
- Feeling faint or dizzy, looking very pale (lie the child down with their legs raised).

If any of these severe symptoms occur get help straight away and dial 999 stating “anaphylaxis” (ana-fil-ax-sis).

Who needs to know about this allergy?

Inform the nursery/school and after school clubs. Grandparents, relatives and school friends’ parents will also need to know.

Is legume allergy life long?

Most school age children and adults with legume allergy will not outgrow the problem and need to avoid this food. In contrast, infants and preschool children often tolerate some legumes, and are less likely to suffer from anaphylaxis. It is particularly important to make a correct diagnosis in this group. Your allergy team may suggest a legume oral challenge in hospital, possibly allowing regular reintroduction of legumes into their diet.

Is there a cure?

There is no permanent cure for legume allergy.

How can I contact you if I need to?

Please telephone, your Children’s Allergy team if you have any queries.



Allergy to pulses and legumes

Information for Parents and Carers

www.allergynorthwest.nhs.uk

References

Verma AK, et al. A comprehensive review of legume allergy. Clin Rev Allergy Immunol. 2013;45:30-46.
Kakleas K, et al. Is it necessary to avoid all legumes . . ? Pediatr Allergy Immunol 2020;31:848-851.

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Legume allergy guidelines – North West Paediatric Allergy Network

This information should be used in conjunction with advice from a medical professional

What are legumes and pulses?

Legumes are a family of foods (*Fabaceae*) that include peas, beans, lentils, soya, peanuts, tamarind, and fenugreek. Pulses are dried legumes. For example, fresh peas are called legumes, while dried peas are called pulses. The exceptions are peanuts and soya beans, which are just classed as legumes.

Peas			
Green pea	Sugar snap/snow pea	Mangetout	Split/dried pea
Beans			
Kidney bean	Cannellini/butter bean	Pinto bean	French/Green/String bean
Black turtle bean	Flageolet bean	Runner bean	Black-eyed bean/pea
Adzuki bean	Mung bean	Borlotti bean	Broad bean/fava
Lentils			
Brown lentil	Red lentil	Puy lentil	Green lentil
Beluga lentil	Pardina lentil		
Chickpeas (garbanzo beans/chana)			
Soya (including edamame beans)			
Peanuts			
Lupin			
Tamarind and fenugreek			

What are the symptoms of legume allergy?

Mild symptoms may include hives, skin swelling, tummy pain or vomiting. Skin reactions, particularly to legume flour can occur when these foods are used in craft activities.

Severe symptoms (anaphylaxis) are much less common and include wheeze, difficulty breathing or feeling faint and dizzy.

How serious is legume allergy?

Severe reactions affecting the child's breathing are uncommon but are more frequent in those with **poorly controlled asthma**, and these children need urgent medical attention.

How to avoid legumes

Legumes can be found in a wide range of foods, including:

- vegan/vegetarian and gluten free foods (e.g. ice-cream, sausages, burgers)
- vegetable soups, salads
- hummus and falafel (contain chickpeas)
- poppadoms, dahls, bhajis, dosas, and pakoras
- curry powder mixes (often contains fenugreek)
- Chinese foods (mangetout and sugar snap peas in stir fries)
- Mexican food (Chilli, refried beans)
- mixed nut snacks or 'healthy' snacks
- sports supplements
- Worcestershire and BBQ sauce

This list is not exhaustive. It is important to check food labels even if you buy a product you have eaten before. Only three legumes are amongst the 14 regulated allergens: peanut, soya, and lupin. Other legumes are not protected by these labelling laws, which means they will not be in bold in a label; so extra precaution is required when checking ingredient lists. The same advice applies when eating out.

Most patients are only allergic to one or a few legumes and can eat others with no problems. Legume allergies is more common in people from the Mediterranean, some Asian and African countries.

Guar gum, carob, and locust bean gum (extracted from carob) are not generally problems for people allergic to legumes. It is a chemical extracted from guar beans and used as a thickening and stabilizing agent in food. However thanks to the refining process it should not trigger a reaction.

If you currently eat any legume without getting symptoms, you should continue to do so unless advised by your allergy team.