



## DEPARTMENT OF ALLERGY & IMMUNOLOGY

### ROYAL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL, MELBOURNE

# SOY ALLERGY

Soybeans contain protein that can cause an allergic reaction in a small number of children. Although soybeans are not a common part of the Australian diet, ingredients made from soybeans are commonly used in many commercial food products.

#### AVOIDING SOY

<p><b>Sources of soy that should definitely be avoided</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soy milk</li> <li>• Soy based infant formula</li> <li>• Soy yoghurts and custards</li> <li>• Soy cheese</li> <li>• Vitari ice confection</li> <li>• Soy sauce</li> <li>• Tempeh</li> <li>• Miso soup</li> <li>• Soy based chocolate</li> </ul>
<p><b>Common sources of soy that should be checked carefully</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most regular breads contain soy flour</li> <li>• Many "allergy" food products contain soy flour eg wheat free flours, bread mixes, pancake mixes etc.</li> <li>• Homemade bread mixes</li> <li>• Textured vegetable protein</li> <li>• Hydrolysed vegetable protein</li> <li>• Baked goods such as biscuits, cakes and pastries</li> <li>• Cake and pancake mixes</li> <li>• Sauces and soup mixes</li> <li>• Baby cereals and meals</li> <li>• Ice creams and ice confection</li> </ul>

#### Will my child grow out of their allergy?

Most children will grow out of their soy allergy with time. The doctors will determine whether your child has grown out of their allergy by a combination of skin testing and food challenge with soy. Skin tests may be repeated every 1-2 years. The result of a skin test may not always show whether your child will have symptoms when they have soy products, therefore a challenge may be the only way to determine if your child has outgrown their soy allergy. Food challenges may need to be done by experienced medical staff.

#### LABEL READING

#### Ingredients List

All packaged foods must have an ingredients list. You must check this ingredient list for any ingredients that may contain soy. Since 2002, it has been law that all potential food allergens (peanut, tree nut, seafood, fish, milk, eggs, soybeans and wheat) must be clearly identified, however small the amount.

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Example: instead of simply hydrolysed vegetable protein, the ingredients list should read hydrolysed vegetable protein (**soy**) or hydrolysed **soy** protein.

**ALWAYS** check the ingredients list every time you buy the food as the ingredients of the product may change.

**Do all soybean based ingredients need to be avoided?**

**No.** Soy emulsifier, soy lecithin and soy oil are made from the fat component of soybeans and the chance of an allergic reaction to these ingredients is unlikely. Include with caution if your child has severe reactions to soy.

**“May contain traces of soy” statements**

These statements are used by manufacturers to indicate that the product may be contaminated with soy through processing and packaging. At present these statements are voluntary and there are no clear guidelines for companies regarding how and when to use them. The wording of the statements makes it very difficult to determine your level of risk and a product that does not contain the statement may be no safer than a product that does. The chances of having a significant allergic reaction through contamination during processing is extremely unlikely and most families choose to ignore these statements as the only safe alternative is to not include any commercial food products in your child's diet.

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