

Allergy and Immunology

SOY ALLERGY

Soybeans contain protein that can cause an allergic reaction due to IgE allergy antibodies in a small number of children. Anaphylaxis to soy bean or soy products is rare in 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>Sources of soy that should definitely be avoided</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soy milk • Soy based infant formula • Soy yoghurts and custards • Soy cheese • Vitari ice confection • Soy sauce • Tempeh • Miso soup • Soy based chocolate
<p>Common sources of soy that should be checked carefully</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most regular breads contain soy flour (although sometimes tolerated. Discuss with your dietitian) • Many "allergy" food products contain soy flour eg, wheat free flours, bread mixes, pancake mixes etc. • Homemade bread mixes • Textured vegetable protein • Hydrolysed vegetable protein • Baked goods such as biscuits, cakes and pastries • Cake and pancake mixes • Sauces and soup mixes • Baby cereals and meals • Ice creams and ice confection

Will my child grow out of their soy allergy?

Many children will grow out of their soy allergy with time. Approximately 50% of children attending an allergy clinic outgrow their soy allergy by age 7 years. As these represent the more severe cases, it is likely that the proportion of milder cases who outgrow their soy allergy will be even larger. 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 periodically (often on a yearly basis) to monitor

your child's soy allergy. The result of a skin test may not always show whether your child will have symptoms when they have soy products, therefore a soy challenge may be the only way to determine if your child has outgrown their soy allergy. Because of the possibility of a severe allergic reaction, food challenges need to be supervised by staff with experience in these challenges.

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.

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. If you are uncertain whether a food is safe to eat discuss this with your doctor.

What do "May contain traces of soy" statements mean?

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 chance of having a significant allergic reaction through contamination during processing is extremely unlikely and some families choose to ignore these statements. An alternative is not to include any commercial food products in your child's diet.