



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Living with Allergies as a Young Adult

Information for patients, relatives and carers

① For more information, please contact:

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Becoming responsible for your own allergies

As you become more independent it is important to take more responsibilities for your allergies instead of relying on your parents or carers. This leaflet will give you some tips for managing your allergies in different situations. If you want any more information on the topics outlined in this leaflet please go to the websites mentioned in the useful resources section.

It is important to know what you are allergic to and where you may come into contact with these allergens so you can avoid/manage them.

Make sure you are aware of the different types of medication you have been prescribed to manage your allergies or any allergic reactions. You should know when and how to use each of your medications.

These are some important things to remember:

- It is important to carry your emergency medication, including oral antihistamines and, if prescribed, your adrenaline auto-injector (EpiPen, Emerade or Jext), with you at all times and ensure they are in date.
- If you also have asthma it is important that this is well controlled. Asthma can be exacerbated by your allergies. If you have an allergic reaction, it may be more severe if your asthma is not controlled. If you have asthma it is very important to attend your yearly asthma review with your GP.
- Check food labels and be aware of cross-contamination with unpackaged foods.
- Make your friends aware of your allergies and what to do if you have an allergic reaction, including the use of your adrenaline auto-injector.
- Close contact and kissing – if someone has eaten something you are allergic to and you kiss them, even a few hours later, there is still a chance you could have an allergic reaction. Ask them to brush their teeth or have some chewing gum first to reduce the risk.

Eating out and drinking

When eating out, many restaurants will clearly state if a dish contains any of the common allergens, however always ask and confirm with the chef that will prepare your meal. It is always a good idea to make staff aware of your allergies so they can be extra vigilant in reducing the risk of cross contamination if other allergens are present in the kitchen.

There is also a risk of cross contamination when sharing food and bottles, especially if the person you are sharing with has been eating something you are allergic to. If possible this should be avoided to reduce risk.

You should also be aware that it is not just food that can cause allergic reactions as some alcoholic drinks also contain nuts or dairy. Also be aware when drinking cocktails where you have a number of different drinks mixed together.

Alcohol (and drugs) can affect your judgment and impaired your ability to make decisions and manage any adverse situations that may arise. Alcohol can also increase the severity of an allergic reaction if you had accidentally been exposed to something you are allergic to. It is advisable not to get into such a state that you cannot deal with these situations should they arise.

Travelling with allergies

When travelling abroad it is important that you inform your travel agent of any allergies when booking your holiday as some companies will do designated nut free flights. Always inform the airline when you are travelling to make sure they have been made aware.

Your adrenaline auto-injector and oral antihistamines should be kept with you in your hand luggage so you have them in easy reach should they be required. If carrying liquids please carry only sealed bottles. If possible you could get a letter from your doctor authorising you to carry emergency medication.

When travelling to countries where they don't speak English, or your first language, there are translation apps available, such as Google translate, or translations cards you can download or purchase. You should try to find translations to the things you are allergic too and carry them with you at all times, pictures can be helpful also.

It is important to research the area you are going to so you know where the nearest hospital is and how to phone emergency services. It is advisable to inform your hotel of your allergies.

It is important to ensure that the people you are travelling with know about your allergies and what to do in an emergency, including how to give your adrenaline auto-injector.

Moving away from home

It is important that when you move away from home that you are registered with a GP so you can access your repeat prescriptions.

If you will be living with others it is important to make them aware of your allergies and how you manage them. If you are in a shared house/flat you may want to think about having your own cupboard with your own cutlery, crockery, pots and pans, etc. to prevent any cross-contamination. For this reason it is also important that the kitchen is kept clean after others have used it and you clean surfaces before you prepare your own food.

Future career

You may not be able to have a career in the armed forces if you have a severe allergy and/or carry an adrenaline auto-injector.

Whatever your choice of future career it is worth thinking about what the chances are of you coming into contact with things you are allergic to, informing your employer and taking appropriate measures to reduce the risk of any accidental exposures.

Other things to be aware of:

- There are a number of different websites that provide many different types of medical alert jewellery that we would advise you to wear when you are out and about to alert people to your allergies if required.
- Smoking can increase the severity of your allergic reaction, particularly if you have asthma.
- You can have a more severe reaction to something you are allergic to if you come in contact with it after you have been exercising due to the increase blood circulation
- Some cosmetics contain nut oils. You can always do a patch test on your hand to see if you will react before using/buying any new cosmetic products.
- Some condoms contain milk protein and may cause a problem if you have a severe milk allergy. If in doubt you can check with the manufacturer to see if a certain brand is milk-free. Latex free condoms are also available for those with a latex allergy.

After the age of 18 years

There is no adult allergy service in the York area, so once you have been discharged by the paediatric service and your allergies will be managed by your GP.

Once you become an adult, there does not tend to be much change in your allergies, however there are adult services in other areas that your GP can refer you to if required.

Please remember to carry your EpiPen, Emerade or Jext at all times.

Useful resources for people with allergies

Websites

Allergy UK – www.allergyuk.org

The website provides support, advice and information for those living with allergies. Website has factsheets on a number of allergy topics.

- Helpline – 01322 619898
- Email – info@allergyuk.org

Anaphylaxis Campaign – www.anaphylaxis.org.uk

The website provides online resources, help and support for people at risk of severe allergy reactions.

- Helpline – 01252 542029
- Email - info@anaphylaxis.org.uk

Asthma UK – www.asthma.org.uk

The website provides support and advice on managing your asthma

- Helpline – 0300 222 5800
- Email – info@asthma.org.uk

Adrenaline Auto-Injectors:

Emerade – www.emerade-bausch.co.uk

Provides information, resources and a demonstration video on the use of Emerade Auto-Injectors.

EpiPen – www.epipen.co.uk/patients

Provides information, resources and a demonstration video on the use of EpiPen Auto-Injectors.

Jext – www.jext.co.uk

Provides information, resources and a demonstration video on the use of Jext Auto-Injectors.

Help to stop smoking

NHS Smokefree –

Help to stop smoking can be obtained from:

- Website - www.nhs.uk/smokefree
- The free Smokefree National Helpline - **0300 123 1044**

or

- Download the Free NHS Smokefree App on your iPhone/Smart Phone.

Apps

Allergy Travel Cards – Eat safely throughout the world with food allergy cards in 190 countries (There are also a number of websites available where you can download and print translation cards).

Emerade - Reminders and information about when and how to use Emerade in an emergency

FoodMaestro – This app can be used to check ingredients and product notes to help find products that are suitable for you.

Google Translate- Free service instantly translates words, phrases and web pages between English and over 100 other languages.

Jext – Jext adrenaline auto-injector patient support

Translation cards

Allergyaction.org offer free, printable translation cards

Jext.com offer free translation sheets as well as a downloadable travel certificate for your GP to sign (For taking JEXT)

Allergyuk.org provide a set of 3 cards at a cost of £15

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact:

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Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email
pals@york.nhs.uk.

An answer phone is available out of hours.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

Please telephone or email if you require this information in a different language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio.

如果你要求本資 不同的 或 式提供，電
或發電

Jeżeli niniejsze informacje potrzebne są w innym języku lub formacie, należy zadzwonić lub wysłać wiadomość e-mail

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