



## Dieto-Diagnostics Food Intolerance Disorders in Children

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### DESCRIPTION

Food intolerance is a condition where the body has difficulty digesting or processing certain foods, causing unpleasant symptoms such as abdominal pain, bloating, gas, diarrhea, constipation, nausea, vomiting, headache, skin rash or eczema. Unlike food allergy, which involves an immune system reaction to a specific protein in food, food intolerance is usually caused by a lack of enzymes, sensitivity to food additives or chemicals, or an irritable bowel. Food intolerance can affect children of any age and can be challenging to diagnose and manage. One of the ways to identify and treat food intolerance in children is to use an elimination diet. An elimination diet involves removing foods that might cause intolerance from child's diet for a period of time, usually a few weeks. Then reintroduce foods one at a time to work out which food is causing the intolerance. It might keep a food diary to record what child eats and drinks and how they feel after each meal.

Some of the common foods that can cause intolerance in children are lactose is a sugar which is found in milk and dairy products. Some children may not have enough of the enzyme lactase to break down lactose, leading to symptoms such as diarrhea, gas and abdominal pain. Lactose intolerance can be diagnosed by a breath test or by eliminating dairy products from the diet and observing the symptoms. Gluten is a protein found in wheat, barley, rye and oats. Some children may have celiac disease, an autoimmune condition where gluten damages the lining of the small intestine and interferes with nutrient absorption. Celiac disease can be diagnosed by a blood test or a biopsy of the small intestine. Other children may have non-celiac gluten sensitivity, where gluten causes symptoms such as bloating, gas, diarrhea, constipation, fatigue or headache without damaging the intestine. Non-celiac gluten sensitivity can be diagnosed by eliminating gluten from the diet and observing the symptoms.

Fructose is a sugar found in fruits, honey and some processed foods. Some children may not have enough of the enzyme fructose-1-phosphate aldolase to break down fructose, leading to

symptoms such as diarrhea, gas and abdominal pain. Fructose intolerance can be diagnosed by a breath test or by eliminating fructose from the diet and observing the symptoms. FODMAPs are short-chain carbohydrates that are poorly absorbed in the small intestine and fermented by bacteria in the large intestine, producing gas and causing symptoms such as bloating, gas, diarrhea or constipation. FODMAPs include fructose, lactose, fructans (found in wheat, onion and garlic), galactans (found in legumes) and polyols (found in some fruits and sugar alcohols). FODMAP intolerance can be diagnosed by eliminating FODMAPs (fermentable oligosaccharides, disaccharides, monosaccharides and polyols) from diet and observing the symptoms.

Food additives are the substances that are added to food in order to enhance flavor, color or shelf life. Some children may be sensitive to food additives such as sulfites (found in dried fruits, wine and some medications), benzoates (found in soft drinks, fruit juices and some medications), Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) (found in some Asian foods and processed foods), artificial sweeteners (such as aspartame) or artificial colors (such as tartrazine). Food additive intolerance can be diagnosed by eliminating food additives from the diet and observing the symptoms.

### CONCLUSION

An elimination diet should also be followed by a careful reintroduction phase where to introduce one food at a time every few days and monitors the child's symptoms. This can help to identify which food is causing the intolerance and how much of it can a child tolerate. Food intolerance can affect the quality of life in children and growth if left untreated. By using an elimination diet, it can help the children find relief from their symptoms and enjoy a variety of foods without discomfort. An elimination diet should be done under the guidance of a doctor or a registered dietitian who can help to plan a balanced and nutritious diet for children while avoiding the potential trigger foods. An elimination diet should not be done for longer than necessary as it may cause nutritional deficiencies or food aversion in children.

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