

## Fruit allergy

Many fruits are known to cause allergic reactions. There are different types of allergies to fruits, and they can sometimes be serious. Visit your GP if you have symptoms after eating any fruits so that you can understand what is happening, learn how to prevent these reactions, and how to manage your diet or any symptoms.

### What is a fruit allergy?

A fruit allergy is a type of food allergy. Food allergy occurs when the body's immune system wrongly identifies a food as a threat. When this happens, the body releases chemicals, such as histamine, in response. It is these chemicals that cause the allergic symptoms.

There are different types of allergies to fruits, including pollen food syndrome (PFS), latex food syndrome (LFS) and an allergy to lipid transfer protein (LTP). Some people also develop symptoms after eating fruits that are not allergy related, but these still need to be carefully managed to prevent the associated symptoms.

You can read about allergies to vegetables in our [Vegetable Allergy Factsheet](#).

### Fruits that can trigger allergies

Any fruit has the potential to cause an allergic reaction, but the following are the most common:

- apple
- avocado
- banana
- cherry
- citrus fruits
- fig
- grape
- kiwi fruit
- lychee
- mango
- melon
- nectarine
- peach

- pear
- pineapple
- strawberry
- plum
- tomato
- jackfruit

Fruit allergies vary by region because of local eating habits and the kinds of fruit people eat nearby.

## What are the symptoms of fruit allergy?

Typically, allergic reactions to fruit and vegetables are mild-to-moderate, however **serious** reactions to fruits can occur and require emergency treatment with adrenaline.

Mild to moderate symptoms may include:

- a red raised itchy rash (known as hives or urticaria) anywhere on the body
- swelling of the face, lips and/or eyes
- a tingling or itchy feeling in the mouth
- mild throat tightness
- stomach pain, vomiting or diarrhoea

## More serious symptoms

More serious symptoms are often referred to as the **ABC** symptoms and can include:

- **AIRWAY** - swelling in the throat, tongue or upper airways, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing
- **BREATHING** - sudden onset wheezing, breathing difficulty, noisy breathing, persistent cough
- **CIRCULATION** - dizziness, feeling faint, sudden sleepiness, confusion, pale clammy skin, loss of consciousness or collapse

The term for this more serious reaction is **anaphylaxis** (ana-fil-ax-is).

In extreme cases there could be a dramatic fall in blood pressure. The person may become weak and floppy and may have a sense of something terrible happening. This may lead to collapse and unconsciousness and, on rare occasions, can be fatal.



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Most healthcare professionals consider an allergic reaction to be anaphylaxis when it involves the **ABC** symptoms. [Read more about anaphylaxis.](#)

While any fruit could cause a serious reaction, studies show that **kiwi, apple, peach, banana, avocado, and mango** are among the most common fruits linked to serious allergic responses including anaphylaxis.

Studies suggest that more serious reactions to fruit are more likely to happen in springtime and in those who have eczema.

## Pollen food syndrome (also called oral allergy syndrome)

Pollen food syndrome usually occurs in people with hay fever who are allergic to pollens.

This is because the proteins in pollen are similar to the proteins in some fruits (and vegetables).

Symptoms are usually mild and usually respond to [antihistamines](#), but sometimes the symptoms can be more severe, so speak to your doctor to make sure this is the right treatment for you.

These reactions occur after eating raw fruits (and some raw vegetables), but part-cooked ones (such as in a stir fry) can also cause symptoms in a few people.

Different people will react to different fruits (and vegetables). You should only avoid those specific fruits that have caused you a reaction. A reaction to one does not necessarily mean you need to avoid others.

Most people will tolerate cooked and tinned fruits if they have pollen food syndrome: for example, many people will develop these oral symptoms after eating raw apple but will be able to eat cooked apple, such as apple pie, without developing symptoms.

Symptoms of pollen food syndrome usually include:

- redness, mild swelling or itching of the lips, tongue, inside of the mouth, soft palate and ears
- itching and mild swelling of the throat
- occasionally, symptoms involve the oesophagus (food pipe) or stomach, such as abdominal tummy pain, bloating, nausea and vomiting
- sneezing, runny nose, or symptoms affecting the eyes



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More serious symptoms including anaphylaxis can occur and include the **ABC** symptoms above.

If someone has pollen food syndrome, serious **ABC** symptoms are unusual because the proteins that cause the allergy are unstable and are destroyed with heat, or once they reach the stomach. Most people with pollen food syndrome have allergic reactions if they eat a fruit in the raw form but are able to eat the cooked or tinned fruit without any problem.

Studies suggest that only **1-10%** of pollen food syndrome related allergic reactions result in **ABC** symptoms.

## Pollen food syndrome and soya

Some people with pollen food syndrome who react to fruits may also react to raw soya products such as soya drinks, soya yoghurt and raw tofu. The first sip or mouthful of a soya product doesn't necessarily cause symptoms quickly, so people eat or drink the whole portion. Reactions can then be severe due to the amount consumed and, in rare cases, can lead to anaphylaxis.

Not everyone with pollen food syndrome will be allergic to soya, but if you have pollen food syndrome, be careful about eating or drinking large quantities of soya for the first time. For example, avoid drinking a whole soya milkshake in one go if you haven't tried it before. A serious reaction is unlikely but if you develop any of the **ABC** symptoms, treat it as **anaphylaxis**.

[Read more about what to do in an emergency.](#)

## Other types of fruit allergy

If you react to fruits or vegetables but aren't allergic to pollen, it's often because you're sensitive to more stable plant proteins—such as lipid transfer proteins (LTPs) or seed storage proteins. These proteins, found in a fruit's skin and seeds, don't break down easily when cooked or digested. As a result, they can trigger allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis.

Two common examples are:

- **LTP allergy:** lipid transfer proteins are tough proteins in the skin, seeds, and pulp of many fruits. Because they resist heat and digestion, they can cause serious, whole-body allergic responses (anaphylaxis).



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- **Latex-food syndrome:** some people with a latex allergy also react to fruits like banana, avocado or kiwi. Their immune system mistakes fruit proteins for latex, leading to potentially serious reactions.

Both **LTP allergy** and **latex-food syndrome** carry a higher risk of anaphylaxis than pollen food syndrome and must be managed carefully with the guidance of an allergy specialist.

**Please see specific factsheets on these conditions:**

[Lipid Transfer Protein](#)

[Latex Allergy](#)

## Other reactions or symptoms after eating fruits

Some people do not have an allergy to fruits but develop symptoms after eating certain fruits. Symptoms can include:

- migraine
- fatigue
- tummy (abdominal) pain
- bloating and frequent diarrhoea
- muscle and joint pains
- blocked or runny nose
- foggy headed

Care must be taken to **only** avoid those fruits that are definitely causing problems, or the diet may become overly restricted, unbalanced and difficult to manage.

## Getting a diagnosis

If you think you may be allergic to a fruit, see your GP who can refer you to a specialist allergy clinic if needed. They can find a clinic in your area from the [British Society for Allergy and Clinical Immunology \(BSACI\)](#).

It's important to get a referral even if your symptoms were mild because it can be hard to tell if future allergic reactions could be more serious.

Once you get a referral, the consultant will discuss your medical history and symptoms with you. They might suggest skin prick tests, blood tests, and/or food challenge tests to help diagnose the allergy and work out how serious it may be.



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Try and keep a diary to record any reactions you have had, as this will help with making a diagnosis. Include details of dates, the food eaten, the quantity, whether it was cooked or raw, and details of the reaction including timings and severity.

[Read more about allergy testing.](#)

Some clues that you might be at **higher risk** are:

- you have already had a serious reaction, with any of the **'ABC'** symptoms.
- you have asthma, especially if it is not well controlled.
- you have reacted to a tiny amount of the food.

## Treating symptoms

If you have mild allergic symptoms, you may be prescribed antihistamine medicine that you take by mouth. But if you are at risk of a serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), you may be prescribed adrenaline – the emergency medicine used to treat anaphylaxis. It is also known as epinephrine.

Because anaphylaxis can happen very quickly, adrenaline is available in different forms that are designed to be easy to use. It's important to know exactly how and when to use your prescribed adrenaline. Healthcare professionals can show you how to use it, and there are also resources such as practice devices and videos on manufacturer websites.

Options currently available on prescription in the UK include:

- **Adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)** – such as EpiPen and Jext.
- **Intranasal adrenaline** – EURneffy, a needle-free nasal spray.

You must carry two in-date forms of prescribed adrenaline at all times as a second dose may be needed if symptoms do not improve after five minutes or get worse.

[Find out more about what to do in an emergency.](#)

[Find out more about adrenaline.](#)

If you have asthma, and it is not well controlled, this could make an allergic reaction worse. Make sure you discuss this with your GP or allergy specialist and take any prescribed medicines.



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## Key messages

- If you have symptoms after eating fruit, visit your GP.
- If you are prescribed adrenaline, carry two doses with you at all times.
- If your reactions are treated by antihistamine, ensure you always carry them.
- Always be guided by your allergy specialist as to which foods you should avoid.
- Ensure that asthma is well managed. See your GP about this.

## Feedback

Please help us to improve our information resources by sending us your feedback at: -

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-resources-feedback/>

## Sources

All the information we produce is evidence based or follows expert opinion and is checked by our clinical and research reviewers. If you wish to know the sources we used in producing any of our information products or you would like a version of this factsheet with the references included, please contact [info@anaphylaxis.org.uk](mailto:info@anaphylaxis.org.uk) and we will gladly supply details.

## Reviewers

The content of this Factsheet has been Peer Reviewed by Tanya Wright, Specialist Allergy Dietician.

## Disclosures

We are not aware of any conflicts of interest in relation to the review of this factsheet.

## Disclaimer

The information provided in this factsheet is given in good faith. Every effort has been taken to ensure accuracy. All patients are different, and specific cases need specific advice. There is no substitute for good medical advice provided by a medical professional.

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## About Anaphylaxis UK

Anaphylaxis UK is the only UK-wide charity solely focused on supporting people at risk of serious, life-threatening allergic reactions. We provide information and support to people living with allergies through our free national helpline and local support groups. We also raise awareness and fundraise to achieve our ultimate aim, to create a safer environment for all people at risk of serious allergies. Visit our website [www.anaphylaxis.org.uk](http://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk) and follow us to keep up-to-date with our latest news. We're on Facebook @anaphylaxisUK, LinkedIn, Instagram @anaphylaxisUK, Twitter @AnaphylaxisUK and you can find our podcast [here](#).