How do I introduce egg into my child’s diet? The 'egg ladder'

Information for patients of children with an egg allergy

Introduction

A member of the allergy team has recommended that you begin to introduce egg into your child’s diet. This may be because your child has successfully completed an egg challenge in hospital and has not shown any signs of an allergic reaction to egg, or allergy testing suggests this will be safe to do at home.

Egg is found in the diet in a variety of different forms. Small amounts of well-cooked egg in manufactured foods are less likely to cause an allergic reaction. If your child has grown out of their egg allergy completely, they may also be able to eat loosely cooked egg or food containing raw egg.

The table on the next page shows examples of foods containing well cooked egg (stage 1), loosely cooked egg (stage 2) and raw egg (stage 3). Stage 1 egg is the least allergic form of egg and stage 3 the most allergic form. If your child has passed a baked egg (cake/muffin) challenge either at home or in hospital, you should try and give them other products in stage 1. Regular intake of these foods may help your child to outgrow their egg allergy quicker. Well-cooked (hard boiled) egg is the last food introduced in stage 1, and sometimes introduced in hospital, but depending on your child's allergy testing and previous tolerance of other products in stage 1, you may be introducing this at home, and then after this, progress to stage 2 to the next 'rung' of the egg ladder.

If at any stage your child has an allergic reaction, treat according to your management/treatment plan and then continue to give egg in the form that was previously tolerated, unless told otherwise by health professionals.

Please also be aware that the quantity of egg, the temperature and length of cooking can all affect the classification of the stages 1, 2 and 3.

Raw or undercooked egg is more likely to cause a reaction than well-cooked egg. It is possible to react to raw or undercooked egg even if a softly cooked whole egg has been previously tolerated.
The Egg Ladder

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1 Well-cooked egg</th>
<th>Stage 2 Loosely-cooked egg</th>
<th>Stage 3 Raw egg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cakes</td>
<td>Homemade pancakes and Yorkshire pudding</td>
<td>Fresh mousse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biscuits</td>
<td>Meringue</td>
<td>Fresh mayonnaise and salad cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dried egg pasta</td>
<td>Lemon curd</td>
<td>Fresh ice cream containing egg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well-cooked fresh egg pasta</td>
<td>Quiche</td>
<td>Sorbet containing egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufactured processed pancakes and waffles</td>
<td>Scrambled egg</td>
<td>Royal icing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg in sausages and prepared meat dishes</td>
<td>Soft boiled egg</td>
<td>Fresh Horseradish sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg glaze on pastry</td>
<td>Fried egg</td>
<td>Fresh Tartare sauce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponge fingers</td>
<td>Omelette</td>
<td>‘Frico’ edam cheese or other cheeses containing egg white lysozyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textured vegetable protein meat alternative (eg Quorn)</td>
<td>Poached egg</td>
<td>The fondant icing inside a Cadbury’s cream egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chewitt sweets</td>
<td>Egg in batter (eg fish)</td>
<td>Mars and Milky Way soft centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg in some gravy granules</td>
<td>Egg in breadcrumbs</td>
<td>Prawn crackers containing egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg in some cheeses</td>
<td>Hollandaise sauce</td>
<td>Raw egg in cake mix and other dishes awaiting cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-cooked Yorkshire pudding</td>
<td>Egg custard</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard boiled egg*</td>
<td>Bread and butter pudding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Well-cooked (hard boiled) egg is the last food introduced in stage 1
Tips for introducing egg

- Start at the stage recommended by your team
- Give your child a small amount (e.g. a bite) of the food containing egg
- If there is no reaction, gradually increase the quantity of this food until your child can tolerate a portion that is appropriate for their age
- Repeat this process for other foods containing egg within the stage that has been recommended for your child

If your child has a reaction, please refer to your management plan for the treatment of the reaction.

- If your child reacts then step down to the last type of food that your child tolerated and discuss this with your allergy team
- The allergy team will advise you on a suitable time period for this reintroduction
- It is common for children who have been avoiding egg to have a dislike of egg and foods that contain egg even when they have outgrown their allergy
- There are foods that contain egg but the egg cannot be tasted (e.g. cakes, chocolates and nuggets). These would be easy foods to try and will help your child have more variety in their diet
- If you are experiencing difficulties introducing egg into your child’s diet, please contact your dietitian.

If your child is not being seen by a Paediatric Dietitian please ask for a referral to be made by the person who gave you this leaflet or your child’s GP.

In an emergency please contact your GP or local Emergency Department.

Who should I contact if I have a problem or question?
Call Allergy/Respiratory nurses on 01895 279721 - leave a message and we will get back to you.

What should I do in case of an emergency?
Seek urgent medical advice or call an ambulance for emergencies.
Languages/ Alternative Formats

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format.

Please contact: 01895 279973

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