



Allergies in Children



Overview

Allergies are a common problem for children. But what is an allergy, exactly? Well, it's an immune system problem. We say your child has an allergy when their immune system reacts to something that's normally harmless. We call these things "allergens."

Common allergens

What are some common allergens? Some are things your child breathes in, like pollen, pet dander, feathers and dust. Peanuts and eggs are common food allergens. Some kids are allergic to certain medicines. Some are allergic to bee stings. And some allergens are things you touch, like latex rubber.

The body reacts

When a child with an allergy breathes in, swallows, touches or is injected with an allergen, their immune system treats it as an invader. Their body goes into defense mode. What happens next? Well, if it's a mild or moderate allergy, your child can have things like itchy, watery eyes, sneezing and coughing. They may have a runny or stuffy nose. Their skin may become red and itchy. And they may have raised bumps or a rash on the skin.

Anaphylactic shock

Sometimes an allergic reaction is much more serious. A severe allergic reaction may include things like breathing problems, vomiting and diarrhea. Your child's blood pressure may drop to dangerous levels. They may faint. We call this type of response "anaphylaxis." This is a medical emergency. It can lead to death. Get medical care immediately.

Conclusion

If you think your child has an allergy, talk to your doctor about an allergy test. Your doctor will create a care plan that's right for you.