These reactions can differ from day to amount consumed.

Nowadays almost everyone you meet seems to have some form of intolerance to a food or chemical. In my clinic I daily see people suffering with a vast range of symptoms, and, without exception, when I change their diet, the symptoms begin to subside. So I am going to be bold enough to state that I believe that everyone – yes, everyone – has a sensitivity or intolerance to one or more foods that they are consuming, and the food is often being consumed on a daily basis. In my opinion, it is compromising their health, often seriously!

A true allergic response to foods is actually very rare, and only a very small percentage of the population is affected. On the other hand, food intolerances are very common. For the purposes of this article, I will mostly refer to all of these as allergy – simply because this is generally how people describe any form of allergic response, intolerance or sensitivity to any substance.

An allergic response is generally thought to trigger a reaction from the immune system in susceptible people, and can be life threatening to some (an anaphylactic reaction), yet be harmless to the majority of the population. Anaphylaxis is the term used for a life-threatening reaction, which can cause swelling of the tongue and throat and constriction of the airways, can lower blood pressure, and can cause death. Thankfully very few of the population have problems that fall into this category.

An intolerance or sensitivity is generally thought to be a problem with digestion or metabolism, and does not involve the stimulation of the immune system. Lactose is a good example of a food intolerance. The digestive system can't break down the lactose, and the body may respond with diarrhoea, colic-like pains, excessive flatulence and bloating. These reactions can differ from day to day, depending on the exposure or amounts consumed.

Intolerances can be temporary, depending on the treatments the person receives, and are generally not life threatening – but can certainly be lifestyle threatening! If left untreated, however, the continued stress on the body can lead to serious health problems.

Very often the symptoms of an intolerance or sensitivity are the common everyday symptom that we learn to 'put-up with'. For example, tiredness, headaches, aches, pains, itchy skin, mouth ulcers, bloating, occasional diarrhoea, forgetfulness, irritability, mood swings and so on. When presenting to a doctor, these patients can often be labeled as hypochondriac, because blood tests don't necessarily show any problems. It is quite obvious that over the last 30 years or so, there has been a huge increase in the number of people suffering with allergies or intolerances. Of course, reactions to pollens, flowers, grasses, animals, dust, dust mites, cockroaches and other insects have been well known. However, chemicals and, in particular, reactions to the humble foods that we consume on a daily basis are emerging as a very real and serious threat to our health and wellbeing.

I have been working in the field of allergies for 23 years. When I first commenced practising, I hardly ever saw tiny babies or toddlers under the age of three. Now I see them every week. And over the last six years the reactions are becoming more and more severe.

In particular, I now see many very tiny babies with severe eczema, and many young children are now developing allergies to a multitude of foods and nuts, peanuts in particular. Peanut allergy can cause an anaphylactic reaction in susceptible individuals. Many childcare centres and schools have now forbidden any form of nut to be taken to school. What has changed that could possibly be a factor in our precious children becoming so allergic?

Adults don't get off lightly either. More and more adolescents and adults are developing food sensitivities. Foods that they have consumed for many years are beginning to affect them adversely. Why is this happening?

**WHY ARE WE BECOMING SO ALLERGIC**

There is no simple answer to this problem. It is incredibly complex and includes a lot of differing factors. However, I believe that these reactions are happening basically because of the heavy overload on our bodies.

Thousands of chemicals have been released into our environment and put directly on our bodies. Chemicals are in our water, in the air that we breathe, in our body-care products and in our foods – meat, chicken, fish, grains, fruits and vegetables. Most of us use many chemicals every day in our homes and gardens, with little thought of the toxicity to us, our children and particularly the unborn child.

Where are the tests to show that using fly spray and at the same time using a bench cleaner or shower cleanser and then bleach to clean the toilet is safe? There aren't any. How about the chemicals in toothpaste that are absorbed into our body via the mucosa almost immediately? We are slowly poisoning ourselves every day – overloading our bodies with chemicals by consuming them, inhaling them and absorbing them through our skin. No wonder our bodies can't cope, and more and more of us are developing allergies and immune-related problems.

A study by the Environmental Working Group in the US in 2004 revealed that newborn babies have 287 chemicals circulating in their bodies before they are born! The foetal cord blood of 10 newborn babies was tested. The researchers stated that the chemicals included numerous ones that are linked to many chronic health problems. Our babies are being born already compromised. And then they
are given Hep-B vaccine at birth! No wonder there is a growing number of children with serious health problems and serious allergic reactions!

In my opinion, one of the main contributing factors to the increases in infantile eczema and severe allergic reactions to peanuts in infants and toddlers is the introduction of the Hep-B vaccine. I don't have the funds to research this, but I do know what I see in clinical practice, and there appears to be a strong link.

Three very common chemicals that are certainly harmful to the human body and used on a daily basis are:

- Formaldehyde – a known carcinogen – is found in many cosmetics products, in household materials such as particle board, plywood, curtains and carpets, in new clothing and in new cars (it can take up to two years to dissipate from that lovely new car!). Vaccines also contain this chemical.

- Chlorine – added to drinking water to kill harmful bacteria and other water-borne disease. Unfortunately, anything that kills the bacteria in water also has the potential to kill the good bacteria in our digestive systems. Hence, in my opinion, chlorine is one of the causes of the increases in human candida overgrowth that we are now seeing, and definitely a factor in the breakdown of health in general.

- Fluoride – found in many substances that are consumed daily, such as toothpastes, mouth rinses, drinking water, soft drinks, some bottled waters and some teas. Fluoride affects the nervous system and the immune system.

Consider two very common factors that are also assaults on our immune systems:

- Antibiotics, which kill not only the bad bacteria, but also the good bacteria, disturbing our digestion and absorption abilities, and facilitating the overgrowth of Candida albicans. This can leave us more vulnerable to moulds and yeasts, and generally more sensitive to foods.

- Vaccinations. In my opinion, one of the main downsides of vaccinations is the chemicals that are added to the vaccines. These chemicals can vary from vaccine to vaccine. Formaldehyde, thimerosal, aluminum hydroxide, and of course, the preservatives, colours and flavours used to maintain the end result.

We must ask – what are we really eating? Where are the scientific tests to show that this multitude of chemicals is safe to consume? There aren't any. It's not really rocket science to see why there are so many allergic reactions and so many degenerative diseases in our society.

Which is it that in spite of so much money having been poured into medical research, chronic degenerative diseases are still on the increase?

WHICH FOODS CAUSE FOOD ALLERGY?
The most common problem foods that I encounter in my clinic are dairy products, yeast, wheat, sugar, eggs, peanuts, shellfish and tomatoes. Occasionally fish, oranges, chocolate, tea, coffee, grapes, mushrooms, nuts and dried fruits can also cause problems. However, the list is almost endless and there are many other foods that can affect some individuals. I have even seen people react to carrots and sweet potato – and rice!

Food additives, colourings and preservatives are also very reactive for most people.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF FOOD ALLERGY?
There is no hard and fast rule as to how a food can affect an individual. We all have a tolerance level that is unique to each of us. Our biochemical make-up and our genetic ability to deal with everything we are exposed to will influence how our body reacts. Our tolerance level will change from day to day depending on:

what we have eaten,
what stresses we have in our life,
the immediate environment around us,
what viruses or bugs we have been exposed to,
what chemicals we have been exposed to (just walk through the perfume section in a department store and you will know what I mean!).

For instance, you may consume a tomato today and have no reaction, yet tomorrow you may react to it! You might have tomato at breakfast time and be fine, yet have that tomato at dinner and have a reaction! You could wear a perfume today and be OK, yet tomorrow the same perfume gives you a headache.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL ...
Many subscribers and other readers who have benefited by this magazine or who are inspired by our principles may wish to support our work further.

One way of doing this is by a bequest through your will to the Natural Health Society of Australia (NSW) Inc. or to the Australian Vegetarian Society (NSW) Inc. or both.

Should you consider doing this, the following wording for a will may be helpful:

"I bequeath to the .................................................. (enter the name of the Society) ABN .................................................. the sum of $.................................................. (or part or all of the residue of Estate) free of all duties to be applied for the purposes of the Society (or as directed by the donor) and the receipt of the Secretary of the Society shall be sufficient discharge for the same".

It may be wise to consult a solicitor to ensure that the bequest is valid.
Symptoms that can be caused, triggered or worsened by the foods we consume.

- Aching muscles
- Anxiety
- Acne
- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Back problems
- Bad breath
- Bed wetting
- Bloating
- Bronchitis
- Bulimia
- Cancer
- Candida
- Catarrh
- Chronic Fatigue
- Cold Sores
- Constipation
- Cystitis
- Depression
- Dermatitis
- Diabetes
- Diarrhoea
- Dizzy Spells
- Ear Infections
- Eating disorders
- Fatigue
- Flatulence
- Fluid Retention
- Foggy thinking
- Forgetfulness
- Frequent urination
- Gallstones
- Haemorrhoids
- Headaches
- Heart problems
- High cholesterol
- Hives
- Hyperactivity
- Indigestion
- Insomnia
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Irritability
- Kidney Stones
- Lupus
- Memory Loss
- Menstruation Problems
- Mental Illness
- Migraine Headaches
- Mood swings
- Mouth Ulcers
- Nausea
- Nightmares
- Overweight
- Palpitations
- Panic Attacks
- PMT
- Poor concentration
- Post-nasal drip
- Shortness of breath
- Sinusitis
- Stomach cramps
- Strange thoughts
- Thrush
- Tinea
- Tinnitus
- Tiredness
- Tonsillitis
- Vomiting

FOUR STAGES OF ALLERGY

**Stage 1**

This is a stage of *alarm* for the body. The tolerance level has been broken through and the symptoms are now becoming obvious. The body becomes quite stressed in trying to deal with this new situation. Any symptom can arise at any age. Most of us fit into this stage at some time or other.

**Stage 2**

Due to the continuing frequent exposure to the offending substance, the body seems to have worked out how to deal with it, and the symptoms subside. You might have heard it said that little Johnny will grow out of his asthma or eczema in a few years, and sure enough this is what appears to happen. What has actually happened, however, is that the reactions have become *masked* or disguised. The body has adapted! There appear to be no symptoms at all. The body is truly amazing.

**Stage 3**

This stage sees the *return of symptoms*. It could be the same symptoms, or brand new ones. For instance, it is very common for an adolescent or adult who had asthma as a child to develop it again as they get older, or to have eczema instead. Asthma and eczema are very close cousins. It is also quite usual for the symptoms to be a lot worse in this stage. The body has tried to cope with and deal with the over-exposure to the offending substance, but the tolerance level is over-burdened so often that the body's defences seem to give up. It takes a lot more work in this stage to clear up the symptoms than it would have taken if stage one had been properly dealt with.

**Stage 4**

Stage four is the stage of *addiction*. The symptoms are only obvious if the food is *not* eaten. This is a very common reason why people who try going on a diet, and giving up their bread or alcohol or chocolate, only last a couple of days before they break out. They feel most uncomfortable, both physically and emotionally, without the substance in their body. This is the most common reason that I know of for going off a diet or a healthy eating plan. Once the offending substance is consumed, the feelings of withdrawal disappear, and the person feels better. Of course, this is what is happening on one level. But underneath, the body is extremely stressed and if the consumption continues, the body will be on a downhill ride. It is just a matter of time before something gives up, and some form of ‘dis-ease’ will manifest.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HEAL OUR BODY?

- Find out what your body is intolerant to and avoid those substances. This will free your entire system and allow your body to begin to heal itself.
- Consume organic foods as much as possible. Even the supermarkets are now carrying a greater range of organic products.
- Stop consuming ‘junk’ food.
- Drink pure water.
- Cease consuming cows’ milk and all products made from it. Cows’ milk is the most reactive food that I see.
- If you are planning to have a baby, have yourself allergy tested, and if you do have sensitivities, particularly avoid them while pregnant.
- Don’t give babies and toddlers under the age of two any wheat, yeast, sugar or cow products.
- Remove as much of the chlorine contamination from our environment and body as we can. Fortunately chlorine is easily removed from drinking water. So let it keep killing bacteria and water-borne disease in our main water supply, but don’t allow it into our mouths or showers. We can filter it out so simply by having a good water filter and a shower filter.
- Change your toothpaste to a fluoride-free brand – or don’t use any.
- Stop using chemically-laden skin-care, hair-care and body-care products. Safe brands are available.
- Cease using chemical cleaners in the home and garden. A very effective general household cleanser is: 1 teaspoon liquid soap, 1 teaspoon borax, 2 tablespoons white vinegar, 1/2 teaspoon washing soda, 2 cups very hot water, 1 or 2 drops tea tree oil. You will need a spray bottle. Always use rubber gloves.
- Combine the all the products together in the spray bottle. Shake the bottle gently until all are well mixed. Spray onto the area to be cleaned, and wipe off with a cloth or paper towel.
- You can purchase most of these products in the supermarket. You can obtain a chemical-free liquid soap from my clinic.
- Avoid antibiotics unless absolutely necessary. There are many extremely effective herbs that can be taken instead.
- De-stress your life as much as possible. Stress can be both good and bad, but it is the typical 'bad' stress responses that can cause ill health. At the very least, learn to...
meditate and do it on a daily basis. At my clinic in Chatswood, NSW, I run a free meditation class every Monday evening.

- At least one month of the year do a healthy detox, and treat your body for candida, fungi, parasites and worms.

RECIPES FOR TOOTHPowDER AND TOOTHPASTE
This is what I use at home and give to my patients.

**Toothpowder**

- ¾ cup bi-carb soda
- 3 teaspoons salt
- 3 or 4 drops peppermint oil or tea-tree oil
- Mix all together in a jar and shake to mix the oil through. Use about ½ teaspoon powder. Put it into your hand, wet the toothbrush and dip into the powder. Makes your mouth feel very fresh.

**Toothpaste**

- 2 tablespoons baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 teaspoons glycerin
- Distilled water (amount to get the consistency you desire)
- 5 drops citrus seed extract
- 5 drops peppermint or essential oil of choice
- Mix all ingredients thoroughly to a toothpaste consistency. Store in a container.

THE AUTHOR

Molly Knight runs the Allergy Prevention Clinic in Chatswood, NSW. She specialises in allergy testing and helping you to rebalance your body and free yourself from any allergies or intolerances that you may have developed.

She also specialises in treating any candida, fungi, parasites or worms that may be present. She has published a book entitled, Bugs That Bug Us, which will be available mid-April 2006.

Her clinic can be contacted on 02 8824 3949. For more recipes and ideas, see Molly’s web page: http://www.allergypreventionclinic.com

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*Natty* Natraburger Arrives in Sydney

Just as McDonalds’ Veggie Burger bites the dust, a new star – NATTY Natraburger – arrives on the scene to challenge the burger offerings of the golden arches. Under the banner, “Have a NATTY here – There’s nothing naughty in a Natty”, Uncle Harry’s Natural Foods launched Natty at the Newtown Festival in November, 2005, with outstanding results.

Allan Rodd, General Manager said, “This was our third year there but we never expected to sell 450 Natraburgers and 220 salads between 11.30am and 4.30pm. We sold out and went home.” Each customer was given a sticker proclaiming, “I’ve just had a NATTY,” and a handout explaining the difference between a ‘veggie burger’ and a Natraburger.

Rodd continued, “Basically, a veggie burger is usually made from lentils, chick peas, tofu, TVP, soy protein and similar ingredients which are mainly eaten by vegetarians. NATTY Natraburgers are made with user friendly ingredients – whole grains (wheat, barley, rice), fresh vegetables (carrots, celery, onions and parsley) and seeds (sunflower and sesame) plus herbs and spices. “Everybody – including vegetarians – eats those ingredients,” he added.

Uncle Harry’s moved into its new, purpose-built, HACCP-approved factory in July. It features a 15-pallet freezer room, large cool room, a modern workroom and a cafe/factory outlet below the second floor offices.

“For the first time, we are now able to load full pallets directly from the freezer onto a refrigerated truck and we expect to expand distribution nationwide within a short time,” Rodd said.

Uncle Harry’s Natraburgers were invented in the Pampered Pantry Health Food shop in Gladesville, Sydney, where Allan and his wife, Joan, operated the business for 19 years. Joan retired when the business was sold but Allan continued making and selling his Natraburgers.

When he launched them at the 1995 Sydney Fine Food Show in Darling Harbour, Rodd received over 300 enquiries including interest from Coles Supermarkets, and the business was on its way.

“As a former Marketing Manager in New York and then as PR and Sales Promotion Manager for Polaroid Australia for two years, I applied my corporate marketing training when setting up my new business venture. Unfortunately, I had to get my production training on the job.

“After 10 years of steady growth, I am preparing for the next step by adding people to help carry the load. So far, I’ve been able to get Natraburgers approved by Halal and Kosher authorities and by the NSW School Canteen Association, and get the company accepted as a Spotless Catering supplier.

“We supply Woolworth’s, Macro and other retailers, but the bulk of our business is with our food service/bulk pack customers. Hospitals, universities, schools – and even prisons – serve Uncle Harry’s NATTY Natraburgers.

“Our website, www.uncleharrys.com.au details sizes, varieties and serving suggestions as well as re-printing the recent *Sydney Morning Herald* story about the business written by Janine Perrett.”

At 68, Rodd said he foresees the day when his products will be as widely accepted as Vegemite and eaten as part of the regular Australian weekly diet along with other main meal ingredients.

“I hope it is sooner than later,” he concluded.

@NATTY Natraburgers by Uncle Harry’s

Contact: Allan Rodd, Tel: 02 9746 3333 or 0409 879 420.