

# Reintroduction of Egg into your child's diet (Egg Ladder)



Most children with egg allergy will outgrow their allergy by the time they are 3 – 5 years old.

Your doctor or dietitian will decide if it is safe and **when** to try to reintroduce egg into your child's diet.

For most children it is reasonable to do this at home, a few children with very severe reactions or who suffer from bad asthma may need a formal egg challenge in hospital.

Unless they have had a more severe reaction, then **most** children will tolerate highly cooked egg (e.g. cakes). As children outgrow their egg allergy, they begin to tolerate lesser cooked egg, followed by lightly cooked egg (e.g. pancakes, scrambled egg) and then finally raw egg (e.g. cake mix, mayonnaise).

The quantity of egg that is tolerated often gradually increases and can vary significantly from child to child. The majority of children will not tolerate other fowl eggs such as ducks/goose eggs however once older some may tolerate these products in a cooked or within food form.

Some children may never be able to tolerate eggs in their natural form but can eat small quantities of cooked egg in foods without a problem.

Although most children will outgrow their allergy there is still a small possibility that your child will react to some egg-containing food.

To try to keep any reactions as mild as possible please follow this guidance.

**Some children who have only had mild symptoms of egg allergy may be able to progress through the egg ladder much more quickly, and if allergic symptoms were confined to a rash – may not require testing at all.**

### When to try reintroducing egg:

- Retry egg when your child is well
- Have some antihistamine (e.g. cetirizine or Piriton®) available. (This can be bought over the counter for age 1+ or obtained via your child's GP)
- Retry egg when you are at home preferably and not too busy.

### Which foods to try:

We have divided egg-containing foods into 4 groups, in approximate order of how well tolerated they are (see following page - this is sometimes called an 'Egg Ladder').

**If your child has other allergies (e.g. milk or nuts) always remember to check that the food is suitable.**

### How to try egg containing foods:

Starting with step 1 – manufactured or highly processed foods containing pasteurised or dried egg

- If your child is already tolerating some egg containing foods try other foods from this group in normal portions and then start with the step 2
- Try a very small amount of the food first (a pea sized bit of cake) and wait for 15-30 minutes before giving your child a second slightly larger amount.
- Only try a small amount on the first day, then a larger amount the next day, you can gradually increase to a normal portion over the next few days
- Once your child has tolerated a whole portion of food then they can try other foods from the same step
- After about 6-8 weeks move onto the next step. Try a very small amount of food from the new step and gradually increase as above – **if symptoms occur – move back to the previous step** and continue to give the tolerated food for another 6-8 weeks and repeat this step
- Step 3 are cooked foods where egg is the major ingredient. Some children will tolerate some of the foods in this step before others (e.g. bread-crumbed food before scrambled egg), if they are able to tolerate certain foods from this step, continue to allow them to, and try the other foods occasionally.
- Wait at least 6 months continuing with step 2 & 3 foods with no allergic reactions before trying step 4, which is uncooked egg in different forms – starting with very small quantities.

### What to do if your child has an allergic reaction:

If your child has a reaction to something, try and keep as calm as you can. In the first instance, giving them the age appropriate dose of the antihistamine should help them if the symptoms are mild.

**If at any point you are worried that symptoms seem to be getting severe, you should seek urgent medical advice by calling GP or NHS 111.**

**Should the symptoms involve breathing difficulties or a loss of consciousness, call 999 and tell the ambulance service that your child has had an allergic reaction and describe the child's symptoms.**

#### Mild Symptoms

- Itchy 'nettle type' rash (Hives)
- Tingly itchy feeling in the mouth
- Feeling sick or nauseous.

#### More Serious Symptoms

- Swelling around the face/mouth or throat
- Difficulty swallowing or speaking
- Sudden severe breathing difficulties or asthma
- Abdominal pain, sudden vomiting
- Feeling faint or losing consciousness.

**These are general guidelines and sometimes will be altered by your allergy nurse, dietitian or doctor dependent on the clinical situation. Please contact them, including your child's full name and date of birth if you have questions or concerns;**

[ruh-tr.childrensallergyclinic@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.childrensallergyclinic@nhs.net)

[ruh-tr.RUHDietetics@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.RUHDietetics@nhs.net)

START AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE & WORK YOUR WAY UP THE LADDER

STEP  
4

### Raw or uncooked egg

Soft meringues,  
Cake icing (Royal icing can sometimes contain egg white)  
Sorbets made with egg white  
Uncooked cake mixes (e.g. licking spoon when cooking!)  
Home-made chocolate mousse  
Some horseradish and tartar sauces  
Mayonnaise

STEP  
3

### Lightly cooked egg; tolerated well if shop bought or well cooked – cook less as tolerance is achieved

Soft boiled, fried or scrambled egg  
Omelette,  
Quiches,  
Fresh egg pasta  
Pancakes/Yorkshire pudding  
Some battered and bread-crumbed foods  
Soft cookies  
Egg custard  
Lemon curd  
Some marshmallows and other sweets e.g. Crème egg®, Chewitts®, Mars® bar (contain dried egg)  
Ice creams made with egg

STEP  
2

### Highly Cooked Egg

Homemade cakes (see recipe below)  
Hard biscuits containing egg  
Dried egg pasta  
Dried Egg noodles  
Very hard -boiled egg (yolk solid)

STEP  
1

### Manufactured or highly processed foods containing Egg

Shop bought sponge / fairy cake  
Jaffa cakes  
Savoury shop bought scone or homemade with dried egg powder  
Shop bought frozen Yorkshire pudding  
Meatballs containing egg as an ingredient

**Recipe for Sponge Fairy Cakes – this contains less egg than a 'normal' recipe**

4 oz /125g self-raising flour

4 oz/ 125g margarine (can be dairy free option)

4 oz/ 125g caster sugar

1 medium egg

Cream together the margarine and sugar until fluffy.

Beat in the egg, and then fold in the flour. Add small amount of milk if seems too thick.

(Alternatively do 'all-in-one' - beat all ingredients together with an electric whisk)

Makes 8-12 fairy cakes

Bake for 15 mins Gas 5/ 190°C

If no reaction try a 2-egg recipe - same amounts of other ingredients.

**Further allergy support can be found on the following websites**

**Egg free recipes;** <https://www.egglesscooking.com/>

**Egg and Dairy free recipes;** <https://www.vegansociety.com/>

**Allergy UK; Allergy patient support** <https://www.allergyuk.org/>

**Anaphylaxis UK; Allergy patient support** <https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/>

**National Eczema Society; Eczema patient support** <https://www.eczema.org/>

**Asthma UK; Asthma patient support** <https://www.asthma.org.uk/>

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital.

Email: [ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net) or telephone 01225 825656.

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