

## The ORAL FOOD CHALLENGE (OFC) – Before the Appointment, and What to Expect

### Before the Visit

1. Certain medications must be stopped:
  - a. Loratadine (Claritin), Fexofenadine (Allegra), Desloratadine (Clarinex), Cetirizine (Zyrtec), Levocetirizine (Xyzal), Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) or other antihistamines must be stopped at least 1 day before the appointment
  - b. Call if you have questions about certain medications, such as Prednisone.
2. Chronic asthma inhalers and nasal steroid sprays should NOT be stopped.
3. If Albuterol or Xopenex are required for symptoms on the morning of the visit, the food challenge may not take place. Call the office.
4. You must bring the food being used in the challenge as directed by your doctor (e.g. peanut butter, baked muffin, scrambled egg, etc.). Also bring other food that can be eaten with the challenge food to make it more palatable.
5. Please bring familiar dishes/bowls, and utensils, and toys and games for a child to make the experience more comfortable.
6. Challenges should NOT be performed during times of illness from seasonal allergies, asthma or viral infection. Call the office to reschedule, with 24 hours notice. The doctor may have to cancel the challenge if necessary for safety.
7. Only very light food may be eaten within 2 hours of the challenge (only dry toast or cereal; no milk or butter). Heavy foods in the stomach will delay absorption of the challenge food.

### What to Expect

1. A regular serving of the challenge food will be administered in small doses at first, then larger doses. There is close monitoring for symptoms and signs of allergic reaction. Reactions are treated with emergency medications.
2. An uneventful challenge will last at least 3 hours. Depending on reactions, the visit could last 4-5 hours. ***Bring something to do and make plans to remain in the office if necessary.***
3. Please visit this information page to read more about Oral Food Challenges (OFC):  
<https://www.aaaai.org/tools-for-the-public/conditions-library/allergies/what-do-patients-and-caregivers-need-to-know-about>