


ADVERSE FOOD REACTIONS

	FOOD ALLERGY	COELIAC DISEASE	FOOD INTOLERANCE
PRESENTATION 	Infantile eczema (particularly facial) Acute reactions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rash around mouth • Hives / swelling • Vomiting • Breathing difficulty • Anaphylaxis 	Fatigue Gastrointestinal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bloating • Cramps • Diarrhoea Anaemia Osteoporosis NB: <i>May have no symptoms</i>	Episodic / recurrent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hives / swellings • Stomach / bowel irritation • Headaches / migraine • Fatigue / aches / pains • Mouth ulcers • Sinus congestion/polyps Children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritable behaviour ('colic / screaming', disturbed sleep, leg aches & pains, ADHD) • Reflux (from birth) • Eczema / itchy rashes • Nappy rash
AGE OF ONSET	Infants & toddlers (mostly)	Any age	Any age
FAMILY HISTORY	Atopic (asthma, eczema, hay fever)	HLA GENE ASSOCIATION: coeliac disease, diabetes, thyroid disease	COMMONLY: irritable bowel, hives, headaches, mouth ulcers
REACTIONS	Immediate (minutes → 1–2 hrs) Reproducible	Chronic Reproducible	Hours → days Variable
MECHANISM	Immune (IgE antibodies)	Immune (inflammatory T cells)	Non-immune (irritation of nerve endings)
FOOD TRIGGERS	Specific food proteins: (egg, milk, peanut, tree nuts, sesame, fish, crustaceans)	Gluten (wheat, barley, rye)	Natural food chemicals: (salicylates, amines, MSG) Additives
TESTS	Skin prick tests, blood tests (RAST) – measure IgE to specific allergens	Must be eating gluten: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antibodies to tissue transglutaminase • Small bowel biopsy to confirm diagnosis 	Elimination diet Food chemical challenges
DIETARY MANAGEMENT	Complete avoidance of single food(s)	Gluten-free diet (strict)	Comprehensive dietary modification: Maintain overall chemical intake below reaction threshold
OUTCOME	Egg, milk: usually outgrown Peanut, tree nuts, seafood: often persist (70-80%)	Life-long immune reactivity Bowel pathology & antibodies usually return to normal on gluten-free diet	Life-long susceptibility Variable tolerance Symptoms can come and go