

MRN

Food to be used for challenge

Your child has been invited to come to the Short Stay Paediatric Assessment Unit (SSPAU) for a food challenge: these are performed in hospital as it is the safest way of finding out if your child reacts to a food.

Stop any antihistamine treatment four days before the challenge

So we can get a reliable result from the challenge, it is important that all antihistamine treatment is stopped for four days before the challenge; this should include medicines like Cetirizine, Loratidine and Fexofenadine. Chlorphenamine can be stopped 2 days before challenge.

Some cough medicines also contain antihistamine, please check, and if you are not sure, contact SSPAU for advice.

Eczema creams and asthma medicines and inhalers are okay and should be continued.

My child is unwell

We will only perform the challenge if your child is well enough on the day. We won't perform a challenge if they have a tummy bug, have a temperature in the last 24-48 hours or if they are wheezy or have had hay fever. Please contact SSPAU to let us know if your child is unwell so that we can rearrange the appointment.

What should I do to prepare my child for the food challenge?

Preparing your child for their visit to hospital will help them to understand what is happening and can improve your child's willingness to co-operate. Talking to your child in advance will give them time to ask any questions or voice any concerns they may have. Use familiar words that your child will understand and give truthful, factual information.

On the day of the food challenge

Your child should have a light breakfast that day. We will ask you to bring in the food to be challenged and will send you a recipe or amount of food required with this

information sheet. The 'top dose' is a portion that a child would be expected to eat in day to day life. If your child is a fussy eater, please do bring well-loved foods to disguise the taste of the challenge food, and for bribes!

When you arrive, you will have the opportunity to ask questions and you will be asked to sign a consent form. We try to involve the child as fully as possible in this process. Before the food challenge is started your child will be examined and state of their general health recorded. Your child will be asked to eat or drink increasing measured amounts at timed intervals. Throughout the challenge a specially trained nurse will carefully monitor your child.

Your child must stay on the ward during the challenge and for at least two hours after the challenge has stopped. It can last up to five hours, but can be all day if your child is unwell during the challenge.

We cannot provide a lunch on the SSPAU so do bring a packed lunch for when the challenge is completed.

What are the risks?

Food challenges can cause an allergic reaction, most involving the eyes, nose, mouth, skin and gut.

Anaphylaxis is a more severe form of allergic reaction and can involve the air way, breathing or circulation. Anaphylaxis is unusual during a food challenge; however, we have medication on the ward to be given in this situation.

You will stay on the ward until your child has fully recovered, this may be overnight.

**For more
information contact:**

**Short Stay
Paediatric
Assessment Unit**

**Telephone: 01803
655492**

**Monday to Friday
8.30am to 9.00pm**

Torbay and South Devon **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust



**PATIENT
INFORMATION**

**SHORT STAY PAEDIATRIC
ASSESSMENT UNIT**

**Information for
parents/carers**

**Children's Oral Food
Challenge**

