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Facts About Allergies For Parents

By News Canada

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by: News Canada

(NC)–Did you know that more than 20 percent of school-age children suffer from allergies. A condition that, if not diagnosed properly, can interfere with a child's ability to concentrate.

In fact, according to the U.S. National Institutes of Health, allergies account for 2 million missed school days each year, and on any given day more than 10,000 children are absent from school due to troublesome allergy symptoms. In Canada, this represents approximately 200,000 missed school days and more than 1,000 children missing school on any given day because of allergies. Allergies can have a significant impact on a child's quality of life.

Fortunately, the allergy experts at Claritin, the leader in the treatment of seasonal and perennial allergies, have developed appropriate information to help parents determine whether a child suffers from allergies.

For instance, if one parent has allergies, chances are one in three that a child will have an allergy, and if both parents have allergies the chance jumps to seven in 10.

By providing parents with the appropriate information, they will be better equipped to consult with their healthcare provider and set up an appropriate system to help avoid a child's allergy triggers.

It can be hard for parents to distinguish between colds and allergies without help, because many symptoms of each are similar.

The casual misdiagnosis that "it's just a cold" can result in unnecessary suffering for the child with allergies. Here are some common allergy symptoms parents should look for:

A runny or stuffy nose and constant sneezing

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Breathing through the mouth or snoring, due to a stuffy nose

Itchy nose, eyes, or skin

Rubbing the nose upward with the palm of the hand (also known as the "allergy salute")

Watery eyes or dark circles under the eyes

Headaches, earaches, or hearing problems

Changes in behavior; children may be irritable or hyperactive

Once a physician has determined that a child has allergies, parents should know there are treatment options available to ease the symptoms including avoidance of allergy triggers, allergy shots, and/or

medications. One medication in particular, Claritin Syrup is learning friendly for children. It is the only non-sedating antihistamine for children to treat both seasonal and year-round allergies without causing drowsiness.

For more information on allergies and their effect on learning contact 1-800-665-1507 or visit

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Food Allergies

By Steve Wilcott

Facts About Allergies For Parents

An allergy can be described as a malfunction of the immune system, an exaggerated response to certain substances. Your body mistakenly believes that something it has touched, smelled or eaten is harmful to it and your body releases massive amounts of chemicals, such as histamine to protect itself.

It is believed that 11 million Americans suffer from food allergies. These allergies are as varied as food itself is. Some people suffer from an allergy to one food, some to many. The most common food allergies are generally eggs, milk, peanuts, tree nuts (such as walnuts), fish, shellfish, soy and wheat.

Symptoms of food allergies are varied and range from a tingling of the mouth to swelling of the tongue and throat to difficulty breathing to hives, cramps, diarrhea, vomiting and in some instances death.

There are ways to help you or your loved one manage your food allergies. First seek the help of an allergist. Your allergist will perform a patch test to determine the exact cause of allergic reactions. This will be the guideline you use as you develop a diet based around your food allergies.

As with other types of allergies there is no cure for a food allergy. Some children do grow out of some food allergies as they age although allergies to peanuts, fish, shellfish and nuts are often considered lifetime allergies. You or your loved one must simply avoid the food that causes the allergy. This can be difficult, especially when eating out in a restaurant. Depending on the severity of allergy, even slight cross contamination of food products can cause reactions.

Food labeling is a very important component of avoiding foods that trigger allergies. Since 2000 the FDA has been presenting information on allergy risks and labeling requirements to manufacturers. They seek to have manufacturers change some labels to be easier to read, using plain language like "milk" on a label instead of "caseinate".

In the case of a milk or egg allergy there are alternatives that can be used when cooking or baking. There are many online sites dedicated to supplying information, education and support to those with food allergies.

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