

How do I know if my urticaria is made worse by a pseudoallergy?

Pseudoallergy cannot be determined by a simple blood or skin test. **Only a diet can lead to the correct diagnosis.** If urticaria worsens after repeated provocation with pseudoallergy rich food, and then improves when the relevant foods are avoided, then food is likely to be at least partly responsible for your urticaria.

How do I find out which foods are relevant?

- During the first 4 weeks all foods rich in pseudo-allergen should be avoided - refer to the "avoid" column in the table on page 2. Only foods as in the "allowed" column should be eaten.
- As from the 5th week one of the foodstuffs listed in the "allowed" column may be tested. This foodstuff should be eaten several times a day on 3 subsequent test days. If no symptoms are triggered, this foodstuff may be eaten from now on and a new foodstuff can also be tested immediately. If symptoms increase during the test days, the tested food should no longer be eaten, and should be avoided in future.
- In order to keep track on which foodstuffs have already been tested and what the reaction was, a diary should be kept of the foods eaten (or you can highlight them on the table). If you have tolerated the food after 3 test days, move it over to the "allowed" column and you no longer have to avoid it.
- After some time patients know their own individual, compatible diet and possibly only have to abstain from a few foods. When testing out the different foods, antihistamines should only be taken when needed otherwise it may be difficult to know how relevant a particular food is.

Does the diet need to be long-term?

Frequently patients suffering from a pseudoallergy can completely stop keeping a low-pseudo-allergen diet after 6 to 18 months, as the bodies reaction to the relevant foods often gets less over time.

Choice of food in low pseudo-allergen food

In general the following applies: use fresh and unprocessed food! The following terms indicate the presence of **additives and should be avoided**: E100–E1518, colourant, preservatives, gelling agent, thickening agent, humectants, emulsifier, taste enhancer, antioxidant, separating agent, glazing agent, sweetener, raising agent, glazing agent, firming agent, flour treatment agent, modified starch, foaming agent, anti-foaming agent, molten salt, stabiliser, flavouring (agents).

However: The following foods may also contain additives without them being indicated:

Unpacked, processed food (eg bread, cake, biscuits, sausage, delicatessen salads), potato products (croquettes, French fries, pre-peeled potatoes etc.) many alcoholic beverages, chocolate, filled chocolates, foods of compound ingredients (eg fruit preparations in yogurt).

	Allowed	Avoid
In general		All foods containing aromas, preservatives, dyes and antioxidants
Basic food stuffs	Bread and rolls without preservatives, semolina, millet, potatoes, rice, durum Wheat, noodles without egg, rice, waffles (only containing rice and salt)	All other foods (eg egg noodles, cakes, French fries)
Fats	Butter, vegetable oils	All other fats (margarine, mayonnaise etc)
Milk products	Fresh milk, fresh cream (without carrageen), curd, natural yogurt, cream cheese (unseasoned), small amounts of young gouda	All other milk products
Animal foods	Fresh meat, fresh ground meat (unseasoned), cold meat (self-made)	All processed animal food stuffs, eggs, fish, shellfish
Vegetables	Most vegetables eg salad (well-washed), carrots, zucchini, Brussels sprouts, white cabbage, Chinese cabbage, broccoli, asparagus	Artichokes, peas, mushrooms, rhubarb, spinach, tomatoes and tomato products, olives, peppers
Fruits	None	All fruits and fruit products (including dried fruits such as raisins)
Spices	Salt, sugar, chives, onions	All other spices, garlic, herbs
Sweets	None	All sweets including chewing gum and artificial sweetener
Beverages	Milk, mineral water, coffee, black tea (non-aromatic)	All other beverages including herbal teas and alcoholic beverages