



The Impact of Food Sensitivities on Daily Life and How to Discover Yours

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Table of Contents

What Are Food Sensitivities?	3
The Root Cause of Food Sensitivities	4-5
What Are the Signs of Food Sensitivities?	5-6
How Do You Discover Food Sensitivities & Intolerances?	6-8
Is There a Cure for Food Intolerances and Sensitivities?	8-9
Food Reactions and Enhancing Longevity	9
Additional Resources & References	10
Be a Healthcare Pioneer	10

Food sensitivities profoundly impact daily life, affecting everything from digestive health to emotional well-being.

Unlike food allergies, which trigger an immediate and often severe immune response, food sensitivities and intolerances can cause chronic, less obvious symptoms that negatively impact overall health and quality of life.

In this article, we'll discuss the nature of food sensitivities, their root causes and symptoms, and advanced diagnostic tools for managing these inflammatory reactions.

What Are Food Sensitivities?

Food sensitivities are immune-mediated reactions that occur when the body reacts inappropriately to certain foods

Unlike food allergies, which involve an immediate immune response, food sensitivities often result in delayed reactions and chronic symptoms that can be challenging to pinpoint.

It's estimated that food sensitivities affect up to 20% of the population, but because their presentation and immune mechanisms can vary greatly, they're difficult to diagnose and manage.

Food sensitivities differ from food intolerances in that they involve the immune system, while a food intolerance involves a deficiency of some component, like an enzyme, interfering with proper digestion.

Various types of food intolerances exist, ranging from pharmacological (caffeine) to enzyme deficiencies (lactose malabsorption) to non-specific gastrointestinal functioning.

A common misconception about food sensitivities is that they're less severe than allergies. While this may be true in the short term, food sensitivities and intolerances can also significantly impact health and well-being if left untreated.

Food sensitivities are associated with many chronic diseases and symptoms, including inflammation, gut dysfunction, and other imbalances in the body.



Vibrant's Food Sensitivity Tests Key Clinical Messages



Food Intolerances



Mechanisms by which gut microorganisms influence food sensitivities



The Root Cause of Food Sensitivities

Understanding the root causes of food sensitivities is essential for effectively managing and alleviating their symptoms.

Unlike food allergies, which trigger an immediate and sometimes severe immune response, food sensitivities often result from more complex interactions within the body.

Several key factors contribute to the development of food sensitivities:

Food Sensitivities, Intolerances, and Genetics

Genetics can play a prominent role in determining an individual's susceptibility to food sensitivities.

If food sensitivities or intolerances run in your family, you're more likely to experience similar issues.

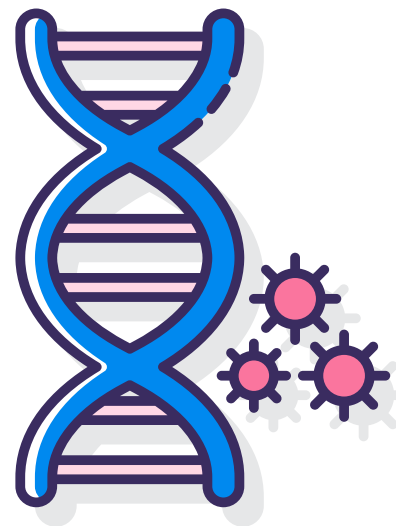
Genetic predispositions can affect how your body processes and reacts to certain foods, leading to chronic symptoms.

For example, histamine intolerance is caused by an imbalance of accumulated histamine and the ability to degrade histamine.

Histamine is a natural amine derived from L-histidine and is present in many foods, including alcohol, processed meat, and fruits and vegetables like tomatoes and eggplant.

In healthy people, exogenous or dietary histamine is eliminated primarily using intestinal diamine oxidases (DAOs), a type of enzyme.

However, certain genetic polymorphisms can cause an insufficient expression of secretory DAO, increasing the risk of histamine toxicity in the human body.



Food Sensitivities and Environmental Factors

Environmental factors can also trigger or exacerbate food sensitivities.

Exposure to environmental toxins like pollutants or mold can compromise the body's ability to process certain foods effectively—primarily due to the damage toxins can inflict on the gut.

For instance, mycotoxins can damage gut health by disturbing the gut barrier and inducing inflammation. These processes can then lead to the development of various food sensitivities.

One example is Reovirus. Researchers suspect that reovirus infection disrupts the host's immune response to food antigens and contributes to the development of celiac disease and loss of oral tolerance to food.

Additionally, lifestyle factors such as stress, lack of sleep, and poor dietary habits can weaken the digestive system, making it more susceptible to food sensitivities.



Mycotoxin and Gut Microbiota Interactions



Food Sensitivities and Gut Health

One of the most influential factors in the development of food sensitivities is gut health. The gut microbiome, composed of trillions of bacteria, plays a vital role in digestion and immune function.

Gut microorganisms can degrade or modify food antigens or allergens, increasing or reducing their immunogenicity—the immune response they trigger.

One key factor in the development of food sensitivities is intestinal barrier dysfunction, also known as leaky gut, which can be influenced by gut microorganisms and pathogens through different pathways.¹

This can allow undigested food particles to enter the bloodstream, triggering an immune response and chronic inflammation.

Food Sensitivities and Immune System Response

The immune system is intricately involved in food sensitivities. In some cases, the immune system mistakenly identifies certain food proteins as harmful invaders, leading to a delayed hypersensitivity reaction. This response can cause inflammation and a range of chronic symptoms.

Unlike food allergies, which involve immunoglobulin E (IgE) antibodies, food sensitivities often involve immunoglobulin G (IgG) or other immune components such as IgA and C3D.²

These components represent different phases or mechanisms of an immune reaction, each playing a distinct role. One or more of these components may be present in a food sensitivity reaction, each inducing inflammation as a result.

What Are the Signs of Food Sensitivities?

Food sensitivities can have significant and wide-ranging effects on various aspects of health and well-being.

These effects can be both physical and psychological, impacting daily life and overall quality of life.

Symptoms of Food Sensitivities

Food sensitivities can trigger many symptoms, including:

- Bloating, gas, and discomfort
- Diarrhea and constipation
- Nausea and vomiting
- Eczema and rashes

- Hives and itching
- Migraines and headaches
- Mood swings
- Anxiety and depression
- Chronic fatigue

Overall, three major signs that you may be dealing with food sensitivities include digestive issues, skin problems, and mood swings/mental health symptoms.

How Do Food Sensitivities Affect Quality of Life?

The cumulative effects of the physical and emotional symptoms induced by food sensitivities can greatly diminish your overall quality of life.

Social interactions, work performance, and daily activities can all be negatively impacted, reducing your ability to enjoy life and engage fully in everyday experiences.

How Do You Discover Food Sensitivities & Intolerances?

Discovering food sensitivities and intolerances can be a complex process due to the symptoms' delayed and varied nature.

While food sensitivities involve an immune response and food intolerances a deficiency of some component, both reactions can produce varied and somewhat delayed symptoms.

Symptoms of food sensitivity may manifest days after consuming the food trigger, making it difficult to connect them to the root cause.

Meanwhile, symptoms of food intolerance, like lactose intolerance, manifest within the same day of consumption of the food trigger, but not as immediately as food allergy symptoms.

To narrow down which foods are responsible, you can try various methods, including elimination diets and food diaries. While these strategies can be helpful, they are also time-consuming, tedious, and imprecise.

Thus, the best way to effectively identify sensitivities and guide treatment is through reliable data, which you can gain from precision testing.

Advanced Diagnostic Tools for Food Sensitivities

Diagnostic testing provides a scientifically backed method for quickly and precisely identifying food sensitivities without time-consuming elimination diets and food diaries.



Vibrant's Food Sensitivity Test

Food Sensitivities Tests

Vibrant Food Sensitivity tests are blood panels that detect sensitivities to up to 209 different foods.

The panels assess different immune responses to whole, raw, water-soluble proteins commonly consumed to determine one's risk for negative food reactions.

There are The Food Sensitivity Test panel options:

- Food Sensitivity Profile 1 (96 foods)
- Food Sensitivity Profile 2 (84 foods)
- Food Sensitivity Complete (209 foods)

Each panel also comes with two different options for antibody testing: IgA and IgG or IgG4 and C3D.

You can also combine both antibody options to gain a full assessment of food sensitivity by measuring IgA, IgG, IgG4 antibodies, and C3D together.

Vibrant Food Sensitivity tests use peptide microarray technology, which allows for:

- Highly precise detection of antibodies to foods
- High level of sensitivity and specificity
- Fewer false positive and negative results
- High reproducibility

Food sensitivity testing will give you a specific and targeted list of reactive and non-reactive foods. This will help you understand which foods are well-tolerated and which are causing issues, allowing you to understand your symptoms.

Wheat Zoomer and Food Zoomers

Vibrant's Food Zoomers are another option you can use to detect food sensitivities.

The Food Zoomers are blood tests that use IgA and IgG antibodies to measure immune system reactivity to small peptides formed when whole proteins are broken down by digestion—unlike the Food Sensitivity tests, which measure immune reactions to whole proteins.

There are nine different Food Zoomer tests, including:

- Wheat Zoomer
- Corn Zoomer
- Dairy Zoomer
- Egg Zoomer
- Grain Zoomer
- Lectin Zoomer
- Soy Zoomer
- Peanut Zoomer
- Nut Zoomer



The Wheat Zoomer is especially useful as wheat is a major allergen.

The Wheat Zoomer is a highly intricate panel that tests for sensitivity, allergy, and autoimmune reactions to wheat.

These tests provide a comprehensive analysis of how your body reacts to various foods, including wheat and other common allergens.

The detailed reports help you understand which foods to avoid and which might be safely reintroduced over time.



Vibrant's Wheat Zoomer Test



Discover Vibrant's Food Sensitivity Tests

Celiac HLA Genetics	HLA Type Tested	Results	Potential Risk
	DQ2	NEGATIVE	
DQ8	NEGATIVE		

Celiac	Test Name	In Control	Moderate	High Risk
	Transglutaminase 2 IgG	0.46		
Transglutaminase 2 IgA			2.80	
DGP Ig			2.00	
DGP IgA			1.20	

Is There a Cure for Food Intolerances and Sensitivities?

Currently, there is no definitive cure for food intolerance or sensitivity. Unlike food allergies, which can sometimes be managed with medications like antihistamines or epinephrine, food sensitivities and intolerances require an integrative approach.

The number one way to manage and mitigate the symptoms of food intolerance or sensitivity is through careful dietary management. Here's how you can effectively manage these reactions:

Dietary Adjustments

Avoiding trigger foods is the primary way to manage food sensitivities and intolerances. Once you have identified the foods that cause adverse reactions through diagnostic testing, it's crucial to eliminate these foods from your diet for 1-3 months. This allows the immune system to calm down.

During this period, healing your gut and supporting the closure of tight junctions can promote further healing, potentially allowing you to reintroduce the food triggers into your diet without symptoms.

Here are some steps to help with dietary adjustments:



References

1. Caminero, A., Meisel, M., Jabri, B. et al. Mechanisms by which gut microorganisms influence food sensitivities. *Nat Rev Gastroenterol Hepatol* 16, 7–18 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41575-018-0064->
2. <https://hello.vibrant-wellness.com/hubfs/Tests/Food-Sensitivity-Complete/Food-Sensitivity-Key-Clinical-Messages.pdf>



Be a Healthcare Pioneer

Enhance patient care with state-of-the-art functional lab testing for accurate diagnoses and targeted treatment plans.

[Get Started](#)



Regulatory Statement:

The general wellness test intended uses relate to sustaining or offering general improvement to functions associated with a general state of health while making reference to diseases or conditions. This test has been laboratory developed and its performance characteristics determined by Vibrant America LLC and Vibrant Genomics, a CLIA-certified and CAP-accredited laboratory performing the test. The lab tests referenced have not been cleared or approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Although FDA does not currently clear or approve laboratory-developed tests in the U.S., certification of the laboratory is required under CLIA to ensure the quality and validity of the tests.

