

LivingWell

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Food allergies in children — what parents need to know

“Would you like a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on wheat?” For many of us, this is a healthy snack. For others, these food items could cause serious illness.

According to the American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, nearly 6 million U.S. children have some sort of food allergy—roughly one in every 13 kids. From 1997 to 2007, there was an 18 percent increase in food allergies among school-aged children. Furthermore, 16 percent to 18 percent of these children have experienced a reaction while at school.

A food allergy occurs when the body overreacts to otherwise harmless proteins found in foods. The most common food allergies are to peanuts and milk. Other triggers include eggs, fish, shellfish (such as shrimp), soy, tree nuts (like cashews) and wheat. Mild reactions can include itchiness, skin rash, sneezing, runny nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can lead to lip swelling, throat tightness, wheezing, pale skin, light-headedness and loss of consciousness. This is an emergency situation that requires immediate medical attention. The most important preventive measure for anaphylaxis is to avoid the triggering agent. Children who have such a reaction to a particular food can be treated with epinephrine in the form of an auto-injectable called an EpiPen.

Outgrowing allergies

The good news about food allergies is that 80–90 percent of children outgrow allergies to milk, eggs, soy and wheat by age 5. About 20 percent of children outgrow allergies to peanuts. Allergies to tree nuts, fish and shellfish tend to last a lifetime.

If you have questions about food allergies in your child, contact your pediatrician. Pediatric allergists can test for and track your child’s food allergies. The “Be a PAL: Protect A Life™ from Food Allergies” education program can help make kids aware of food allergies. For more information, reference these links:

- <http://acaai.org/allergies/who-has-allergies/children-allergies>
- <https://www.foodallergy.org/resources/kids>
- <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2010/11/29/peds.2010-2575.full.pdf+html>
- <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/news/Pages/AAP-Report-Managing-Food-Allergies-at-School.aspx>

Celebrate tobacco cessation with LIVE FOR LIFE

July 2015 marked the 8-year anniversary of Duke Medicine officially going 100 percent tobacco-free at all sites. In celebration of this Tobacco-Free Anniversary Event, the **LIVE FOR LIFE** team had a roving information table moving throughout East Campus, West Campus and additional areas to promote the various tobacco cessation resources available to Duke employees and their dependents.

On an ongoing basis, **LIVE FOR LIFE** offers free counseling to help you choose the resource that will work best for you:

- Online support
- Telephone counseling
- Nicotine replacement therapy
- Discounted co-pays on Chantix or Bupropion

Quitting smoking is the most important action you can take to improve your health. For more information about **LIVE FOR LIFE** and its tobacco cessation programs, including the latest science on vaping and how to have the tobacco surcharge removed, call **919-684-3136**, option 1, or visit www.hr.duke.edu/tobaccofree.





Duke Run/Walk Club will get you moving

Whether you're a beginner walker, an experienced runner training for a race or somewhere in between, the Duke Run/Walk Club can help you meet your health and fitness goals. Offered every spring and fall, the club is a FREE, 12-week program available to all Duke faculty and staff at any fitness level. The next session began August 17 and concludes November 4.

The club meets Mondays and Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. off Frank Basset Drive near the practice fields on West Campus and at the East Campus wall across from Whole Foods on Broad Street. Groups also meet at 5:00 p.m. at Duke Regional and at 5:30 p.m. at Duke Raleigh hospitals. Members can report their exercise online, and can choose to meet with the groups or exercise on their own for credit. The self-reporting option is accessible once you register via Net ID and establish a password.

Benefits of the club include:



- An on-site coach for your group
- Camaraderie and support
- A run/walk interval-training plan for your fitness level
- Access to a free yoga or circuit class each week
- Weekly e-mails with tips, motivation and news about area races and special events

Exercise for all: Duke Fitness Club

Regular exercise is hard to beat as a healthy strategy for managing stress and losing or maintaining your weight. Duke Fitness Club offers easy online enrollment for 15 facilities throughout central North Carolina. You choose the gym with the hours, classes and equipment that best suit your needs. You can also take advantage of convenient payroll deduction. After three months, you can cancel at any time.

The campus facilities, Wilson and Brodie Rec Centers, cost only \$20/month and are convenient for both East and West Campus employees. With the exception of Wilson and Brodie, employees may add family members to their enrollment.

Many Duke Fitness Club facilities offer childcare and activities such as swimming that you can do with your kids. The YMCAs are a popular choice for families; Southwind in Durham is budget-friendly for those who want access to a smaller gym with a pool. Check out the Jewish Levin Community Center as well; it's the newest facility to join our network.

For a list of all participating clubs and more information about how to enroll, visit www.hr.duke.edu/benefits/wellness/fitness.

"The Run/Walk Program is a unique experience where the challenge-level is just right and the camaraderie is contagious. It's something to look forward to at the end of a Monday and Wednesday at work."

—Taylor Miron, **LIVE FOR LIFE**
Fitness Specialist

To register or get more information, visit www.hr.duke.edu/benefits/wellness/runwalk.



Better than perfect: how to overcome perfectionism

Having high standards and striving for excellence are typically considered to be positive characteristics that can push you to reach your peak level of performance. According to the National Institutes of Health, perfectionists go too far, tending to believe that perfection can and should be attained, often in multiple areas of life. Perfectionists may set standards that are so high they either can't be met or can only be met at the expense of their health and the quality of their relationships with others.

"Perfectionism is a trap," says Andrew Silberman, MSW, LCSW, CEAP and Director of Personal Assistance Service for Duke University and Health System. "Being human means making mistakes, experiencing failure, and encountering setbacks. As well as being unavoidable, making mistakes is an essential part of learning and growing."

Voltaire said that "perfect is the enemy of good." Having realistic goals often increases your motivation and can lead to greater achievement. Perfectionists, on the other hand, often suffer from a set of self-defeating thought patterns, feelings, and behaviors that continually push them to achieve goals that are unrealistic. The result? They may be overly hard on themselves, feel anxious and depressed, never start important projects or quit before they reach their goals.

Do you recognize any of the following behaviors in yourself?

- You beat yourself up over even small mistakes.
- You're hypercritical of others' mistakes.
- You aim to be the best at everything you attempt, even activities you're not truly interested in.
- You spend more time than others, right down to the last possible moment, perfecting something. You sacrifice your well-being and neglect sleeping, eating, exercising, and family and friends to achieve your goals.
- If a situation doesn't turn out as you envisioned, you spend excessive time mulling over what you could have done differently.
- You fear failure and tend to be defensive when criticized.
- You focus on the end goal to the detriment of the process.

Perfectionism is rampant in American society, and perfectionists often obsess over their status, appearance, or achievements, according to a recent article in *Psychology Today*. The opposite of perfection isn't disaster, it's reality—and possibility. When mental health experts recommend striving for excellence instead of perfection, they are not suggesting that we let go of our drive, ambition or desire to succeed. They are trying to help us thrive in a thoroughly imperfect world.

Moving beyond perfectionism

Overcoming perfectionism is a process that requires perseverance and being gentle with yourself. According to the Anxiety Disorders Association of British Columbia, one of the most effective strategies is to replace your self-critical or perfectionist thoughts with more helpful and realistic ones.

For example, instead of thinking, “If I need help, I’m weak” or “I should never appear nervous,” practice saying these kinds of statements to yourself:

- “I’m only human; everyone makes mistakes.”
- “It’s okay if someone is angry or doesn’t like me; no one is universally liked.”

To cultivate supportive self-talk, think about what you would say to a friend and be as kind to yourself. Make a list of personal actions and qualities that you feel good about and review it as needed. Some people find it helpful to keep a journal or scrapbook of inspirational quotes and positive feedback from others that they can review when they’re feeling low or stuck.

When you catch yourself having an “all-or-nothing” thought, remind yourself that you deserve to be loved and respected despite being imperfect. Say “STOP” to yourself when you notice that you are criticizing yourself for flaws, real or imagined. Practice compassion by treating other people with patience and acceptance. This can reduce your fear of being criticized by others and improve your relationships both at home and at work.

Further, you can choose to spend time with people who value connecting over competing. Surround yourself with others who support you and appreciate you for who you are — warts and all. If you’re having a difficult time recognizing the qualities that make you special, a professional counselor can help you learn new skills for becoming more self-accepting.

Relief is in the moment

Perfectionists often get bogged down with details that aren’t that critical. When you’re feeling stuck, it can help to review your priorities and make conscious decisions about where to put your energy. Ask yourself, “Does this really matter? What is the worst that could happen? Can I survive that? Will this matter next week or next year?” Remember, relief isn’t at the end of your “to do” list; it’s in the moment.

Being a perfectionist is much like having a phobia of making mistakes or appearing to be less than perfect. If you believe that you should never make a mistake, that making a mistake means you are a complete failure, or that failing makes you a horrible person for disappointing others, it’s easy to see how life can feel scary much of the time.

Is your perfectionism diminishing your quality of life? Here are some Duke-specific resources that can help:

Personal Assistance Service

Personal Assistance Service (PAS) offers free and confidential consultations, short-term counseling and referrals to Duke faculty, staff and their immediate family members. Call **919-416-1727** or visit **www.hr.duke.edu/pas**. Duke Regional Hospital employees can call their Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at **919-932-9026** and Duke Health Raleigh Hospital employees should call **919-872-4786**.

Duke Integrative Medicine

At Duke Integrative Medicine, you experience a new approach to care that brings you and your provider together in a dynamic partnership dedicated to optimizing your health and healing. Our approach focuses on all of who you are, recognizing that the subtle interactions of mind, body, spirit and community have a direct impact on your vitality and well-being.

Besides patient care and professional training, we offer a variety of classes and workshops on topics such as:

- Changing from Within
- The Not So Big Life
- Transform Your Health: Write to Heal
- Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction
- 60-Second Stress Relief

We also provide massage and acupuncture. Visit **www.dukeintegrativemedicine.org** to register for a workshop or get more information about our services.

Facing fears in a gradual and consistent way (called “exposure”) is an effective way to overcome phobias, and it can help you release yourself from perfectionism as well, according to the Anxiety Disorders Association of British Columbia. Exposure involves gradually putting yourself in situations that you usually avoid out of fear, such as:

- Sending an email that includes some mistakes.
- Seeing a movie without reading the reviews.
- Speaking up at work without rehearsing in your head what you plan to say.
- Neglecting a housekeeping item, such as dusting the blinds or vacuuming up pet hair.

Don’t expect immediate results. If you practice these strategies consistently over time, you’re likely to notice your negative reactions to mistakes diminishing and your recovery time shortening. You’ll feel more relaxed and positive. You’ll have learned that lowering your standards doesn’t mean living without standards. We’re all works in progress.

Having realistic expectations for yourself can actually help you to excel without neglecting your health or your relationships with your family and friends.



Come celebrate. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the Duke Farmers Market

From asparagus to zucchini, treat yourself to delicious local produce at the Duke Farmers Market, which runs through September 25 this year. In addition to farm-fresh fruits and vegetables, vendors offer baked goods, granola, herbs, artisan cheeses and dressings, and live microgreens. Grab lunch to go from Cosmic Cantina, Pomegranate Kitchen, Makus Empanadas or NOSH Café, or try a refreshing hand-brewed tea from Sangha Teahouse.

Visit <http://www.hr.duke.edu/benefits/wellness/farmers/index.php> for more info.

Now Held at Five Locations

Duke Hospital Farmers Market

Every Friday, April 24 – September 25, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the green space walkway behind the Searle Center

Duke Regional Farmers Market

Tuesdays, April 28 – September 29, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. with Walker's Farm

University Towers

Tuesdays from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. with LoMo Market

PRMO on South Alston

Wednesdays from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. with Rockabilly Farm

Duke Gardens on Anderson Street

Tuesdays, April 14 – December (with some vendors running on slightly different schedules), from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Mobile Market CSA Program

Bringing produce to your door. The Mobile Farmers Market runs year-round and offers fresh produce, meat, eggs, fish and other products in a convenient pre-packaged box.

The concept is referred to as Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA). Small farms and producers are given the opportunity to connect directly with consumers, and vendors offer delivery to your home or office. You can also pre-order boxes for weekly pick-up. For details visit: www.hr.duke.edu/benefits/wellness/mobilemarket.



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