

Navigating Food Allergies and Intolerances

Food allergies and intolerances can complicate diabetes management. It's important to differentiate between the two and take appropriate steps to manage them.

Food Allergies

- **Trigger an Immune System Response:** An immune system reaction to specific food proteins.
- **Symptoms:** Can range from mild to severe, including hives, swelling, difficulty breathing, and anaphylaxis.
- **Management:** Completely avoiding the allergen and carrying an epinephrine auto-injector.

Food Intolerances

- **Trigger a Digestive System Reaction:** Often due to enzyme deficiencies or sensitivities to certain foods.
- **Symptoms:** Typically less severe than food allergies, including bloating, gas, diarrhea, and abdominal pain.
- **Management:** Dietary modifications, such as avoiding trigger foods or taking digestive enzymes.

Common Food Allergies and Intolerances

- **Food Allergies:** Milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, and soy.
- **Food Intolerances:** Lactose intolerance, gluten sensitivity, and histamine intolerance.



Managing Food Allergies and Intolerances with Diabetes

- **Read Food Labels Carefully:** Check for allergens and potential cross-contamination.
- **Consult with a Registered Dietitian:** A dietitian can help you create a personalized meal plan.
- **Carry Emergency Medications:** Always have your epinephrine auto-injector with you if you have a severe food allergy.
- **Communicate with Healthcare Providers:** Inform your healthcare team about your food allergies and intolerances.

By understanding the differences between food allergies and intolerances and taking appropriate precautions, people with diabetes can manage their condition effectively and enjoy a healthy diet.



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