

Oral Allergy Syndrome

Definition

- A minor allergic reaction to some raw fruits and vegetables
- Causes itching and swelling only to the lips and tongue
- Also called Pollen-Food Syndrome

Health Information

Symptoms

- Rapid onset of itching (or tingling) and swelling of the mouth.
- This includes the lips, tongue, throat, and roof of the mouth.
- The uvula (tag of tissue hanging down in back) can become very swollen.
- The reaction follows eating a high risk raw fruit or vegetable.
- Oral Allergy Syndrome (OAS) can start by age 5.
- Severe reactions and serious symptoms rarely happen.

Causes

- A contact allergy. It is limited to the parts of the mouth that touch the raw food.
- Trigger foods for OAS are always raw and uncooked.
- **Fresh Fruits.** Includes apple, apricot, banana, cherry, melons, orange, peach and pear
- **Raw Vegetables.** Includes carrot, celery, parsley, potato and tomato. Carrots and celery have the highest risk for also causing serious symptoms.
- **Certain Seeds.** Includes sunflower seeds and fennel seeds

Oral Allergy Syndrome and Nose Allergies Can Be Linked

- Over 50% of people who are allergic to pollen also have OAS. This means 10% of all people.
- Ragweed pollen allergy can cross-react with all melons. Also, sometimes with bananas and tomatoes.
- Birch pollen allergy can cross-react with raw potatoes, carrots, celery and apples.
- Grass pollen allergy can cross-react with tomato and kiwi.

Care Advice

1. Overview:

- Oral Allergy Syndrome (OAS) is very common. It happens in 10% of people. Most of them also have pollen allergies.
- The symptoms are not harmful and can be treated at home.
- Required for OAS: Your child has never had any serious symptoms with this food.
- OAS symptoms don't last very long.
- Here is some care advice that should help.

2. Rinse the Mouth:

- Rinse the lips and mouth with warm water. Do this a few times.
- Reason: To remove any traces of the food.

3. Cold Pack:

- Use ice or a cold pack to the swelling lips or tongue for 10 minutes.
- Reason: To lessen the swelling and the itch.

4. **Allergy Medicine:**

- One dose of Benadryl may help the symptoms go away faster.
- No prescription is needed. Age limit: 1 year or older.

5. **Prevention of Future OAS:**

- Keep a list of the foods that cause your child's symptoms.
- Avoid these foods if they are raw (fresh).
- The cooked version of these foods usually won't cause any symptoms.

6. **What to Expect:**

- With or without treatment, the itching will go away in 1 to 2 hours.
- The mouth swelling will also go away quickly.

Call Your Doctor If

- Trouble swallowing or drooling occurs
- Trouble breathing occurs
- Swelling or rash occurs elsewhere
- You think your child needs to be seen
- Your child becomes worse

Pediatric Care Advice

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