

# Setting the Standard





## The value of food allergy testing in primary care

For patients experiencing food allergy symptoms, it can be difficult to pinpoint which foods are responsible. Specific IgE (sIgE) testing provides detectable levels of sensitization to specific allergens that can help either confirm or rule out allergy when combined with clinical history of an adverse food reaction.<sup>4</sup>

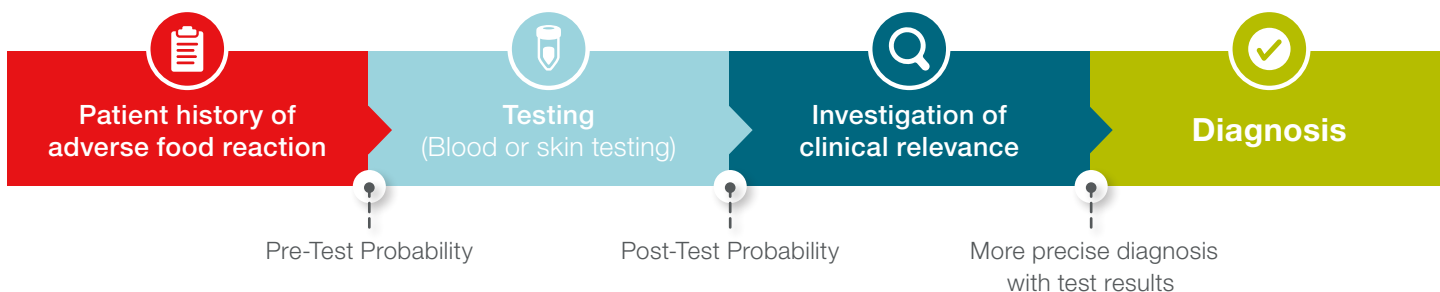
When possible, ordering sIgE testing for individual foods is recommended if patient history points to the suspected food(s).<sup>4</sup> If history is not clear, utilizing a food profile with the most common allergenic foods is an option. Assessing total IgE in conjunction with specific IgE results may provide additional context for result interpretation.

Component resolved diagnostic testing, which provides more detailed information on specific allergic sensitizations, can also be valuable when evaluating an adverse food reaction and is often offered as a reflex option.<sup>1-3</sup>

By utilizing sIgE testing in your practice, you can help patients with:

-  Appropriate avoidance
-  Tailored education
-  Management consideration
-  Appropriate referrals

### Steps to food allergy diagnostics<sup>4,5</sup>



*Note: Co-factors such as exercise, viral infections, NSAIDs, and alcohol should also be considered.*

### Develop a plan

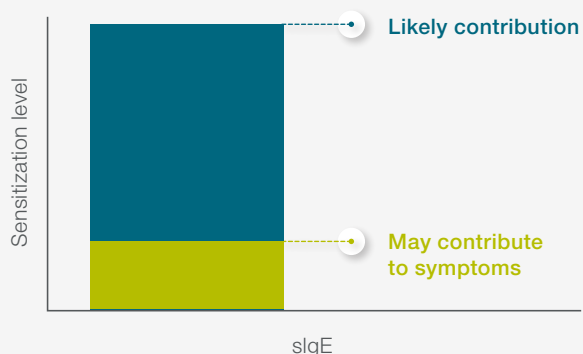
When sIgE to multiple food allergens is present, the trial elimination of a single suspected food may help establish a food allergy diagnosis. Food elimination should be done one allergen at a time for a limited period of time,<sup>6</sup> and the expertise of a specialist should be considered either before the elimination or as an appropriate next step, for further investigation.<sup>5</sup>

## Interpretation of specific IgE food test results\*

When used in conjunction with a documented history of symptoms and exposure, sIgE test results help to accurately diagnose food allergy. The higher the sIgE, the more likely it is contributing to symptoms. However, even low levels can be a contributing factor.<sup>4</sup>

\*It is important to note that detectable levels of sIgE to food allergens do not always correlate with clinical allergy. Investigation of clinical relevance with clinical history of symptoms should be done once sensitization is detected.

### Correlation with symptom history and exposure



Function	Primary Care	Allergist
Initial diagnosis	✓	
Definitive diagnosis		✓
Single-food elimination diet	✓	✓
Multi-food elimination diet		✓
Natural history + tolerance	✓	✓

Food allergy testing can help you determine which foods may be appropriate for trial elimination. By following these recommendations, it will help you determine when to manage a patient in your practice or when to refer to a specialist for further evaluation and consideration for an oral food challenge (OFC).<sup>5</sup>  
**Refer to the chart to the left for more guidance on how to partner with an allergist to manage food allergies.**



IgE-mediated tests can help support an allergy diagnosis, determine sensitizations, or help to rule out allergy altogether<sup>4,5</sup>



**Ruling out allergic sensitization may reduce worry and unnecessary food avoidance or medication<sup>4,5</sup>**

### References

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2. Matricardi PM, et al EAACI Molecular Allergy User's Guide. *Pediatr Allergy Immunol* 2016; 27: (suppl23): p156-2016.
3. Hamilton R, Hemmer W, Nopp A, Kleine-Tebbe J. Advances in IgE Testing for Diagnosis of Allergic Disease. *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice.* 2020;8(8):2505-2514.
4. Boyce JA, et al. *J Allergy Clin Immunol.* 2010;126:S1-S58.
5. Kwong, K et al. The Benefits of Specific Immunoglobulin E Testing in the Primary Care setting. *AJMC.* 2011; Vol. 17; 445-459.
6. Burks W. ICON: Food Allergy. *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology.* 2012;129(4):906-920.

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