

Food Allergies

Food Allergy Basics

- ◆ The role of the immune system is to protect the body from germs and disease
- ◆ A food allergy is an abnormal response by the immune system to a food protein
- ◆ When the food is eaten, the immune system thinks the food is harmful and releases histamine and other chemicals to “attack” the enemy

Food Allergy Basics

- ◆ There is no cure for food allergy
- ◆ Complete and strict avoidance of the food is the only way to prevent a reaction

Food Allergy Basics

Eight foods cause 90% of the allergic reactions in the United States:

Milk

Peanuts

Eggs

Tree Nuts (e.g. walnuts,
pecans)

Wheat

Fish

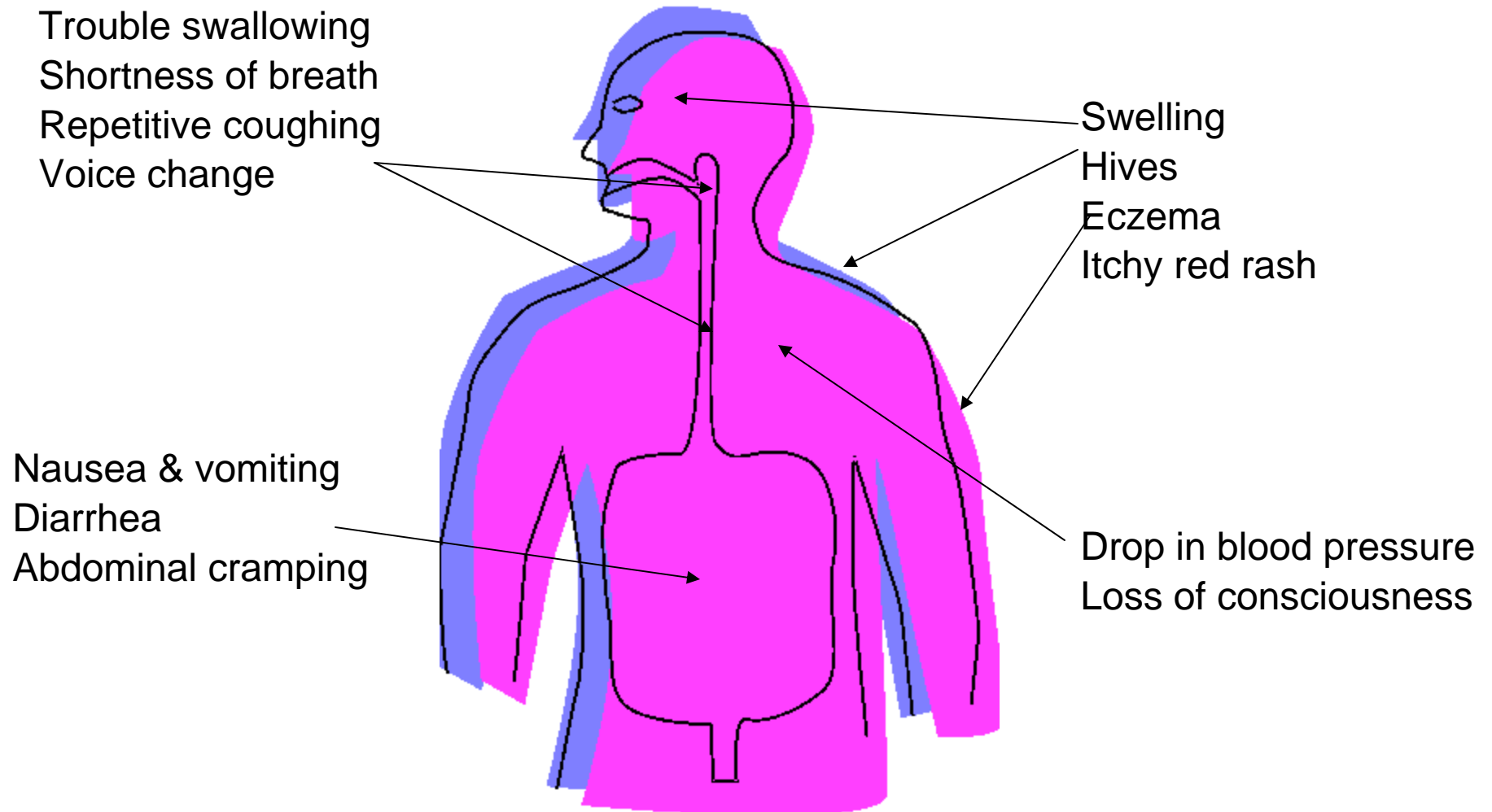
Soy

Shellfish

Food Allergy Facts

- ◆ 12 million Americans have food allergies
- ◆ Over 3 million of them are under the age of 18

Symptoms – one or more may occur shortly after eating



Anaphylaxis

- ◆ A serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death
- ◆ Each year in the U.S. anaphylaxis to food causes over 50,000 emergency room visits
- ◆ Individuals with food allergy plus asthma are at greatest risk for a serious reaction

Epinephrine (adrenaline)

- ◆ Prompt administration of epinephrine is key to surviving anaphylaxis
- ◆ Prescribed as EpiPen[®], or Twinject[®] auto-injectors



How can I help a friend who has
food allergies?



Protect A Life
From Food Allergies

What does it mean to Be a P.A.L.?

1. Food allergies are serious. Don't make jokes about them.
2. Don't share food with friends who have food allergies.
3. Wash your hands after eating.
4. Ask what your friend is allergic to and help them avoid it.
5. Get help immediately if a friend with food allergies becomes ill!

Food Allergy Quiz – True or False

1. Food allergies can be cured with allergy shots.
2. Milk is a common food allergen.
3. It's OK to test if a food is safe by licking it or taking a tiny bite.
4. If a friend is having an allergic reaction you should not let them go off alone.

Answer – Question 1

1. Food allergies can be cured with allergy shots.

False: There is no cure for food allergies. Avoiding the food is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction.

Answer – Question 2

2. Milk is a common food allergen.

True: Milk is a common allergen. People who are allergic to milk must avoid cheese (pizza), ice cream, butter, yogurt, and all other foods that contain milk.

Answer – Question 3

3. It's okay to test if a food is safe by licking it or taking a tiny bite.

False: Even a tiny lick or bite of a food can cause a reaction. People with food allergy must read the ingredient statement before eating a food.

Answer – Question 4

4. If a friend is having an allergic reaction you should not let them go off alone.

True: Sometimes symptoms start out mild, and your friend might think it's okay to go off alone. But, things can quickly get worse, so stick with your friend in case your help is needed.