**FOOD CHALLENGES**

**What is the reason for the challenge?**

Food challenges are performed to determine if your child is allergic to a food or outgrown their allergy. A food challenge cannot determine the “severity” of your child’s food allergy (i.e. anaphylaxis *vs.* non anaphylaxis). If you do not understand the reason for the challenge, please call the room you saw Dr Mehr in to discuss.

**What are the main things I have to remember about the challenge?**

1. Unless otherwise specified, please **bring the food** in question to the challenge. Cow’s milk, whole egg, peanut, treenuts, sesame, soy and wheat are provided.

2. The challenge takes approximately **4 hours** but may take longer if a reaction occurs.

3. Please call the rooms to rebook a challenge if:

 Your child is unwell (fever, wheeze, asthma, vomiting, diarrhoea) on the day of the challenge or the days leading up to the challenge. If your child is sick several days prior and is not expected to be well, please call the rooms and reschedule.

 Anti-histamines (e.g.. Zyrtec, Claratyne, Telfast, Phenergan, etc)

have been given in the 48 hours prior to the challenge day.

 Medications apart from anti-histamines can be given on the day of the challenge (e.g. topical creams, antibiotics, asthma preventers such as Flixotide/others).

**What are the risks of the challenge?**

The allergic reaction, if it occurs, can range from mild (in most cases) to severe (anaphylaxis). In the event of a severe reaction (anaphylaxis), your child will have injection(s) of adrenaline into the outer thigh muscle. In the majority of cases, this results in rapid recovery. Whilst extremely rare, deaths from anaphylactic reactions have been reported. If you do not understand the risks you should discuss these with Dr Mehr.

**Does my child need to fast?**

No your child can have their normal diet prior to the challenge.

**What happens in a food challenge?**

Our Allergy nurse will offer your child a small amount of the food and gradually increase the amount every 20-30 minutes. Your child will be observed for an allergic reaction. After the final dose, your child will be observed for a further 1 hour (for wheat challenges will be 2 hours). During the food challenge we prefer your child not have any other foods.

**Is there any special preparation?**

Your child should not have any antihistamines or antihistamine–containing medicines for 48 hours prior to the challenge as this may interfere with the result. Anti-histamine containing medicines include: Actifed, Avil Decongestant, Benadryl, Chemists own allergy relief tablets or cold and allergy mixture, Codral, Demazin, Dimetapp, Sinutab, Sudafed sinus pain and allergy relief Tixylix, Tylenol.

**What to bring with you**

Please bring computers, soft toys, iPADs, or reading material.

**Will a skin test be done prior to the challenge?**

In some cases, we may ask for the skin test to be repeated (particularly if your child has not had one for > 6 months).

**Who do I contact if I have questions?**

If you have any questions please call the rooms you saw Dr Mehr in, to further discuss.