Food which you have been eating for years may suddenly produce an allergic reaction.

Lea Wee reports

Food allergies are less common in adults than children, as they can strike for the first time in adult life. People with the condition may have battled with sudden rashes, sneezing, sweating or vomiting.

Dr Tan said: “Many ingredients can go into food and this poses little problem to a baby, but can cause great difficulty to an adult.”

In a severe allergic reaction called anaphylaxis, also known as “anaphylactic shock”, the immune system mistakes a food protein as harmful. This produces the classical symptoms of anaphylaxis, such as hives, rashes, nausea, diarrhoea or vomiting.

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Most children outgrow their food allergies, with the exception of those who are allergic to peanuts, tree nuts or shellfish.

If you develop an allergy in adulthood, you will need to liaise with the immunology from Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH). The doctor will need to test you with skin prick test, which involves inserting a pin prick in the skin’s surface to test for sensitisation.

Dr Tan: “It’s a safe test and patients can send it to the laboratory to make their own extract for a skin prick test.”

But five minutes into the dish, the food allergy manager said her throat became dry and painful.

“I saw Ms Ong Wei Ling six years ago,” she said. “She carried a self-injectable dose of adrenaline in her handbag wherever she went. Her father had no allergies until he reached his 50s and started becoming allergic to venomous food, medications, pollen and dust. Now he is 70s, his allergies are still a major problem.”

Cynthia Cheong

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Agnes Meurac

“I’m allergic to low F. It causes my mouth and lips to swell.”

Top AI

“MSG! I would find myself sweating. This is not a food allergy but a neurogenic reaction.”

Cyndi Cheong

“Food allergies are still a major problem.”

Liu Ling

“No, I don’t have any food allergies now.”

Agnes Meurac

“I used to be allergic to onions, celery and coriander. I have always tried to avoid these ingredients.”

Cyndi Cheong

“I have family members to experience food allergies, although I myself am not allergic. Most families in Malaysia are affected.”

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