

EOSINOPHILIC ESOPHAGITIS

WHAT IS EoE —Eosinophilic esophagitis is characterized by the infiltration of a large number of eosinophils, a type of white blood cell, in the esophagus. Eosinophils are an important part of the immune system, helping us fight off certain types of infection. A variety of stimuli may trigger this abnormal production and accumulation of eosinophils, including certain foods. Eosinophilic esophagitis means eosinophils infiltrating the esophagus. People with EoE commonly have other allergic diseases such as asthma or eczema. Eosinophils are not normally present in the esophagus.

Diseases other than EoE can cause eosinophils in the esophagus including gastroesophageal reflux diseases (GERD), food allergy, and inflammatory bowel disease.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF EoE - Symptoms vary from one individual to the next and may differ depending on their age. Vomiting may occur more commonly in young children and difficulty swallowing in older individuals.

COMMON SYMPTOMS INCLUDE -

1. reflux that does not respond to usual therapy
2. dysphagia (difficulty swallowing)
3. food impactions (food gets stuck in throat)
4. nausea and vomiting
5. failure to thrive (poor growth or weight loss)
6. abdominal or chest pain
7. malnutrition

How is EoE diagnosed - In individuals with symptoms consistent with EoE, an upper endoscopy is often performed.

Allergy testing - once the diagnosis of EoE is confirmed, allergy testing is typically requested

In many situations, avoiding allergens that trigger the eosinophils will be effective treatment. The reaction to foods are not always immediate — this means that a food can be consumed with no obvious reaction, but over a period of days to weeks the eosinophils triggered by the food will cause inflammation and injury to the esophagus. For this reason, food logs (keeping track of foods and symptoms) may not identify the offending food. The skin testing will include skin prick testing and may include patch testing.

TREATMENT

Most children and adults with EoE respond favorably to dietary treatments. The dietary restrictions are guided by food and allergy testing allergy testing resolved.

Elemental Diet

All sources of protein

Eggs, Milk, Soy, Corn, Wheat, oats, peanuts, rice, green beans, apples, pineapple, and some meats like chicken, beef and turkey.

Elemental diet - amino acid formula, most effective and removal all allergenic 98% effective
milk eggs, soy, wheat peanuts tree nuts and shellfish - Six food elimination diet diet 80% effective

MEDICATIONS

There are two types of EoE – PPI responsive and PPI not responsive. We usually start off with PPI and if that fails, then we move on to additional treatment regimens which include use of montelukast (Singular) and Fluticasone. Unlike inhalers that are used for asthma, here we recommend swallowing the steroid inhaler. Your physician or pharmacist can educate you on the use.