



# Pediatric Pulmonology & Allergy Care



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*A pediatric pulmonologist looks into the respiratory ailments of children and accordingly treats them.*

## **When to consult a pediatric pulmonologist?**

Cystic Fibrosis: Respiratory issues, gastric problems like diarrhea and weight gain are symptoms of this life-threatening ailment. catching it early on can help extend your child's life span.

- **Asthma:** Wheezing or compromised breathing is an indication.
- **Obstructive apnea:** Symptoms to look out for are loud snoring, breathing accompanied by noise and feeling sleepy during the day. This can be dangerous sometimes as your child's breathing can stop during sleep.
- **Chronic cough:** If the cough prevailed for more than 3-4 weeks even after medication, it is an indication.
- **Pneumonia:** A recurring infection of the lungs is an indication.
- Anything to do with **prevailing respiratory conditions.**

Flexible fiberoptic bronchoscopy and pulmonary function testing are common medical testing procedures to test for respiratory diseases. Fiberoptic scope is a non-invasive procedure to examine the lungs and respiratory tract internally.

# What are allergies and why do they happen?

Allergies occur when the immune system in an individual's body reacts to a foreign substance by producing antibodies, resulting in physical symptoms like inflammation, rashes, itchy skin, or breathlessness. Your child can have allergies to particular foods, certain medications or animal hair, saliva or urine, allergies caused by contact with irritants, allergic asthma or rhinitis.

**“Allergies are genetic or hereditary that mostly have no cure.”**

## How can you test for allergies?



**“If you notice prolonged symptoms or reactions to various food items or irritants in your child, consider seeing an allergist.”**

- To test for allergies towards foods, the doctor would observe your child's reaction while offering foods that contain the most common allergens, thus narrowing down the options and determining which foods cause the allergy. An elimination test that restricts the child from consumption of certain allergy foods confirms what foods your child can or cannot consume.
- To test for skin allergies, the doctor will hold jewelry, latex/rubber, animal saliva among others in contact with your child's skin to assess any reaction to the prolonged exposure.
- Skin prick/ skin injection test is commonly used to expose your child's skin, externally/ internally, to common allergens.

# What kind of allergies do children have?

The most common allergies that children can have are:

- **Allergic rhinitis:** Specific airborne allergens in the air, like pollen, dust particles, and animal fur cause an allergic reaction. This can lead to fever-like symptoms, blocked nose/ear with congestion, itchy or red eyes.
- **Allergens in food:** Some examples are peanuts, walnuts or other tree nuts, milk, fish, prawn, or any kind of seafood.
- **Allergy to pollen:** Your child will develop a runny nose or an itchy eye every morning during the spring season every year.
- **Mold or dust mites:** These are common allergens that can cause breathlessness, headaches, and other respiratory problems.
- **Allergy to breast milk:** This happens to some babies which is particularly harmful to the baby.
- **Allergy to Penicillin:** The drug should be administered carefully, keeping in mind the patient's history of allergies.
- **Allergy to irritants:** Gold, silver, or copper jewelry, smoke, latex material, or certain types of perfume can induce a reaction.

- In extreme cases, blood tests are carried out to test for antibodies that induce allergic reactions. When most tests fail, a blood sample will help ascertain minute details.

# How to minimize the effects of allergies in your child?

- If your child's skin is susceptible to any foreign object, don't let them wear it for prolonged periods. Have medication at home to relieve your child's rashes/itchiness.
- Children that get an allergy by being exposed to dust/pollen must tread cautiously. Ensure that the school your child goes to is aware of his/her allergies, in order to avoid severe consequences like anaphylaxis.
- Avoid cleaning or dusting around a child that is sensitive to dust/pollen or mold. And make sure that curtains or pillow covers are constantly cleaned to avoid dust from forming.
- If your child has allergic reactions to certain food items, keep them away from such foods and check the ingredient list in manufactured/packaged products.
- Type I, II, III, and IV allergic reactions differ based on the type of allergen. Only after crossing out the possibility for every allergen that your child is sensitive to, medicines should be administered.



**“You can always consult a professional specializing in allergies for a more comprehensive check-up!”**



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Please contact your doctor for more details.