

## DO YOU HAVE FOOD SENSITIVITIES?

When we think of food allergies, we often picture a person in extreme distress, gasping for air, mottled with red, blotchy hives. Peanuts are often the culprit. Most of us don't have these severe reactions, but many of us are sensitive to different types of foods and may not recognize the symptoms. Long-term exposure to food sensitivities cause constant and persistent stress on the immune system, which may lead to chronic, auto-immune, or degenerative diseases.

Unlike food allergies, which occur immediately after ingesting a specific food, food sensitivities may occur 2-4 days after eating the food in question. Eating small amounts of the food may cause no reaction, while eating the food in large quantities or many days in a row may cause symptoms.

### **Symptoms of food sensitivities include, but are not limited to:**

- Nasal congestion and puffy eyes
- Gas, bloating, constipation, diarrhea
- Frequent colds
- Fogginess, forgetfulness, fatigue
- Headaches, migraines
- Arthritis, joint pain

### **Common food sensitivities include:**

- Coffee (caffeine)
- Wheat
- Milk and eggs
- Peanuts and cashews
- Nightshade vegetables (tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, potatoes)
- Soy
- Shellfish
- Citrus fruits (not lemons or limes)
- Corn
- Any food that is genetically modified

### **What can you do to limit exposure to food sensitivities?**

- Get tested – Meridian Stress Assessment (MSA) will identify sensitivities to specific foods.
- Eat a varied and rotating diet. You are more likely to develop sensitivities to foods you are eating on a daily basis.
- Keep a food diary and eliminate foods that cause symptoms.
- Read food labels – sensitivities are often caused by preservatives and fillers.
- Eat organic – genetically modified foods are not yet labeled in Canada.
- Supplement with probiotics to increase good gut flora and enhance immune system functioning.
- Keep the digestive system operating smoothly and cleanly with lots of fiber (such as ground flax seeds), drink plenty of water, and exercise regularly.

Please see Dr. Hoffmann ND for more information about Food Sensitivities and how Naturopathic Medicine can help you.