



Lupin food allergy

Lupin, like other protein containing foods such as peanut, soybean, dairy, eggs or shellfish may trigger an allergic reaction in a small percentage of the population.

Some, but not all people who are allergic to peanuts also react to lupin.

There is no evidence that lupin is more potent an allergen than other foods. The range of severity of reaction to lupin is similar to that seen with other food allergens (1).

Food allergy is an abnormal immune response to naturally occurring food proteins or peptides.

Food allergies are not the same as food intolerances, which are generally caused by chemical agents such as sulphites, or digestive enzyme abnormalities (e.g. lactose intolerance or favism).

The frequency of lupin allergy in the general population is low. European studies indicate that less than 1% of the population that have eaten lupin-based foods have been reported to have an immediate allergic reaction (1).

Signs and symptoms that have been reported vary including swelling of face and eyes, asthma, throat tingling, cough, abdominal symptoms, and some rare cases of anaphylaxis (2).

Some people who are allergic to peanuts may also react to lupin. Approximately one-fifth of patients with peanut allergy also react to lupin, but most present with mild and localised clinical symptoms. Other people react to only lupin or peanut (3).


The incidence of lupin allergy appears to be less in Asian and the Middle Eastern countries than in Europe and Australia.

Lupin allergens are resistant to normal cooking procedures, including boiling, baking, and microwave heating.

There is a mandatory requirement of allergen labelling for manufactured lupin food in Australia and New Zealand since 2018.

If you wish to confirm you are allergic to lupin, you can consult your doctor and ask for a referral to a clinical allergy specialist.

References

1. Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (2015). Lupin Allergy – Information for Health Professionals (2015).  ASCIA HP Lupin allergy 2015344.54 KB
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3. Bansal, AS, Sanghvi, MM, Bansal, RA, *et al.* (2014). Variable severe systemic allergic reactions after consuming foods with unlabelled lupin flour: a case series, *Journal of Medical Case Reports*, 8: 55.