

# Soya ladder

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

Your child's allergist or dietitian has advised you to introduce soya into your child's diet. This is not suitable for children with immediate allergy to soya.

### Before trying the home soya introduction

Make sure that your child is well. This means:

- their eczema, asthma or hay fever is well controlled
- they do **not** have a cough, cold, diarrhoea or vomiting
- if you're excluding other foods from your child's diet continue to do so - only introduce one new food at a time
- continue any regular medications as prescribed
- if your child has been started on a new medication, wait at least two weeks to make sure they tolerate the medicine before introducing soya
- if your child has been prescribed allergy medications, have them available at home

It is best to start at the weekend when you have time to observe your child.

### What if my child develops symptoms?

#### Immediate reaction:

It is very unlikely that your child will experience immediate soya allergy symptoms (e.g. hives). If any symptoms occur within two hours of eating soya:

- stop giving soya
- follow your child's Action Plan if they have their own

If your child does not have an Action Plan and experiences serious symptoms such as breathing difficulty, dizziness or floppiness call 999.

## Delayed reaction:

- this can include worsening of eczema, tummy discomfort, constipation or loose stools (poo)
- it can happen between two hours and up to three days after introducing the new food, or trying a higher step on the ladder
- however, the above symptoms can also occur for lots of other reasons: e.g. catching a cold virus or a tummy bug, being stressed/anxious because of exams or not sleeping well. So, if your child develops delayed symptoms and their symptoms are mild, stop giving soya for three to five days, until they have recovered, and then try the same step again
- if symptoms are significant, very distressing or have occurred on two attempts at the same step, and there are no other obvious reasons for this, go back and continue at the previously well-tolerated step. You can try the next step again in three months' time. If significant symptoms occurred after step 1, stop and continue avoiding soya altogether.

## How to introduce soya following the soya ladder

Please follow the advice in this table:

Steps	Take 3-7 days for each step	You can give one of the following foods or choose a different option. Always check the label	If excluding milk, egg, wheat or nuts. You can give one of the following foods or choose a different option. Always check the label
<b>Step 1</b>	<p>If tolerating soya lecithin go to step 2.</p> <p>If not tolerating soya lecithin give one portion of a food containing soya lecithin per day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milkshake made with chocolate Nesquik<sup>®</sup></li> <li>• Pom-Bear<sup>®</sup> crisps</li> <li>• Sunbites<sup>®</sup> Crackers</li> <li>• Walkers<sup>®</sup> crispy crackers</li> <li>• Cadbury's<sup>®</sup> mini animal biscuits</li> <li>• Dairy free chocolate buttons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chocolate Nesquik<sup>®</sup> milkshake made with milk alternative</li> <li>• Pom-Bear<sup>®</sup> crisps</li> <li>• Dairy free chocolate buttons</li> <li>• Nairns gluten free chocolate biscuit (may contain milk label disclaimer)</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2</b>	Give baked food containing soya flour once a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ¼ slice bread (e.g. Kingsmill<sup>®</sup>, Warburtons<sup>®</sup>, Hovis<sup>®</sup>)</li> <li>• ½ <b>Free From Rich Tea or Digestive biscuit e.g. Sainsbury's, Asda (may contain nuts label disclaimer)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Schar Gluten Free Cream Cracker</li> <li>• ¼ <b>Schar Gluten Free White Roll</b></li> <li>• ¼ <b>slice Schar Gluten Free Bread</b></li> <li>• ½ <b>Free From Rich Tea or Digestive biscuit e.g. Sainsbury's, Asda (may contain nuts label disclaimer)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Step 3</b>	Increase the amount of baked soya	Double the portions from step 2 daily until your child is eating a full portion. A portion is the amount your child can eat. It will vary depending upon their age and appetite.	

<b>Step 4</b>	Give whole soya food once a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 heaped teaspoons of soya yoghurt, soya dessert or soya custard</li> <li>• 10g soya cheese</li> <li>• 10g tofu</li> <li>• ½ level teaspoon Wowbutter Creamy Nut Free Butter®</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 heaped teaspoons custard - use Bird's® custard powder made up with soya milk</li> <li>• 2 heaped teaspoons of soya yoghurt (Alpro® may contain nuts label)</li> <li>• 10g soya cheese</li> <li>• 10g tofu</li> <li>• ½ level teaspoon Wowbutter</li> </ul>
<b>Step 5</b>	Increase the amount of whole soya	Double the portions from step 4 daily until eating a full portion	
<b>Step 6</b>	If adding soya milk proceed with this step	Give 50ml soya milk and increase by 50ml a day until your child is drinking their usual milk volume. It can be mixed with their usual milk	

**If tolerating full portions of soya for 7 days your child should be able to include soya freely in their diet.**

## Contact details

If you have any questions, please contact our paediatric dietitians on 020 3312 1127. Please note that this number is not for urgent healthcare queries. For urgent queries, contact 999 (for emergencies), 111 (for non-emergencies) or your GP as appropriate.

## How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net) The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street  
London W2 1NY

Email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

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## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:  
[imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

## Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: [www.imperial.nhs.uk](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk)

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