

Food hypersensitivity

What is the impact of food hypersensitivity (including allergies and intolerance) and how can we reduce it?

In the UK, an estimated two million people are living with a diagnosed food allergy, and 600,000 with Coeliac Disease. The Food Hypersensitivity Area of Research Interest (ARI) aims to improve the quality of life for people living with food hypersensitivities and support them to make safe and informed choices to effectively manage risk. The ARI includes several key themes of work:

- Development of management thresholds for allergenic foods
- Immunological aspects of food allergy
- Characteristics of food allergy across the life course
- Food allergen labelling and consumer confidence and choice research
- Evaluation of FSA allergy guidance

The major aims of this ARI include:

- Facilitating the development of allergen management thresholds for use by industry and regulators
- Determining the prevalence of food allergy across the UK adult population
- Understanding the information needs for consumers with food hypersensitivity when shopping and eating outside of home
- Identifying where businesses need support in provision of allergen information and implementing best practice allergen management

The work of this ARI helps inform policy so that food businesses can implement best practice in terms allergen information provision and practices in their kitchens, and to help food hypersensitive consumers make safe and informed choices when shopping and eating out of the home.