

# Milk oral immunotherapy (MOIT)

This leaflet will give you more information about MOIT desensitisation programme, including the risks, benefits, and what you can expect of the process. If you have any questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for your child.

## Why your child has been offered MOIT

Cow's milk allergy affects up to 3 out of 100 (2-3%) children in the UK. Most children grow out of their milk allergy completely between 1 and 3 years of age. For some children, a milk allergy continues after this, and a few are still allergic in adulthood. MOIT is used to target children who appear not to be outgrowing their milk allergy.

## What is MOIT?

MOIT is a treatment programme designed to give increasing amounts of milk to your child with the aim of helping them develop a tolerance.

You will be given instructions by the MOIT team, with an increasing dose of milk for each day. At first, the milk is diluted with water and your child will be consuming only a few drops. As they progress with the programme, the concentration of the milk solution and quantity of milk increases.

It is essential that you follow the instructions strictly and **do not** increase the dose more quickly as your child might react badly. Your child will still need to follow a strict milk-free diet and only take the amount of milk recommended by the MOIT team.

Before starting the programme you will have a full understanding of what is needed, and you will be fully supported throughout.

Details of what is involved in the programme are outlined below:

- At your child's first appointment, you will meet the MOIT team. We will talk to you about the desensitisation programme so that you fully understand what is needed. An asthma assessment and additional allergy testing might need to be done. Your child might also need to undertake a baked milk challenge before enrolment on the programme, if they have not had one in the last year.
- If your child is suitable you will be asked to sign a consent form. You will be given emergency medication and the equipment needed to make up the doses at home. Training on how to administer emergency medication and make up the doses will be given.

- Your child will have their first dose of milk in hospital and be observed for 1.5 hours afterwards. This is to make sure that if there are any reactions, we can treat them immediately.
- After this, your child will be managed as an outpatient and support will be given by telephone or video consultation.
- The programme will take a minimum of 67 days (just over 2 months) to complete. Some children might take longer, for example, if they have had a reaction and need to repeat a few steps.
- The aim is that, by the end of the programme, your child will be able to tolerate 250ml of cow's milk each day. They will need to continue to take this amount of dairy products each day to maintain this tolerance. If your child cannot tolerate this amount, they will be asked to continue to take a lower dose that is tolerated.

A few children have to stop the desensitisation programme. This can be because:

- they have had one or more severe reactions
- they are refusing to take their daily dose of milk
- the family can no longer commit to the programme.

Your MOIT team will discuss with you if they feel your child should not continue, and you will be advised to avoid milk.

## What are the risks?

Following the programme will reduce the risk of your child having a reaction to the milk. They might still have an allergic reaction even if you are strictly following the programme. Most symptoms will be mild, but some may be more severe and require adrenaline. You will need to have your child's emergency medications available, and be ready to follow your child's allergy action plan. An allergic reaction does not necessarily mean that your child cannot continue with desensitisation. The MOIT team will discuss if it is appropriate for your child to continue.

## Is desensitisation a 'cure' for your child's milk allergy?

Successful completion of milk desensitisation does not mean that your child no longer has a milk allergy. It means that they can tolerate 250ml cow's milk, equivalent to 9g of milk protein. They will need to continue taking this amount of milk protein each day to maintain their tolerance. Post-desensitisation advice to support the continued consumption of milk will be given once your child starts the programme.

## What to do next

If you are interested in MOIT for your child, please email the MOIT team, **email:** [gst-tr.childrensallergymilkoit@nhs.net](mailto:gst-tr.childrensallergymilkoit@nhs.net). Please include your child's name, date of birth and hospital number which can be found on any of your child's hospital letters. Someone from the team will contact you to discuss what the next steps are.



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