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23rd May 2025

Dear Colleagues,

We are writing to you to make you aware of some changes in allergy testing to primary care which included removing specific IgE (S.IgE) for food mixes and total IgEs (adults only).

S.IgE for food mixes can result in unnecessary dietary restriction and patient anxiety. It is important to direct allergy testing by history and not use it as a screening tool. If a specific food allergen is suspected, then S.IgE for this particular food allergen should be requested rather than a food mix that would include various other food allergens of different groups.

Total IgE is a nonspecific test which is seen in a wide range of conditions including hay fever, asthma, eczema, parasitic infections, allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis and rare cases of immunodeficiency. Raised total IgE does not indicate allergy and in isolation is not an indication of further allergy testing. Low total IgE also does not exclude allergy.

We have discussed this with your ICB and provided relevant teaching to Barnsley GPs in the GP BEST event on 19 March 2025 and Rotherham GPs in the PLTC meeting on 8 May 2025. It was agreed to remove total IgE (Adults only) and S.IgE for food mixes from primary care requests.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

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Consultant Immunologist and
Clinical Lead for Rotherham
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