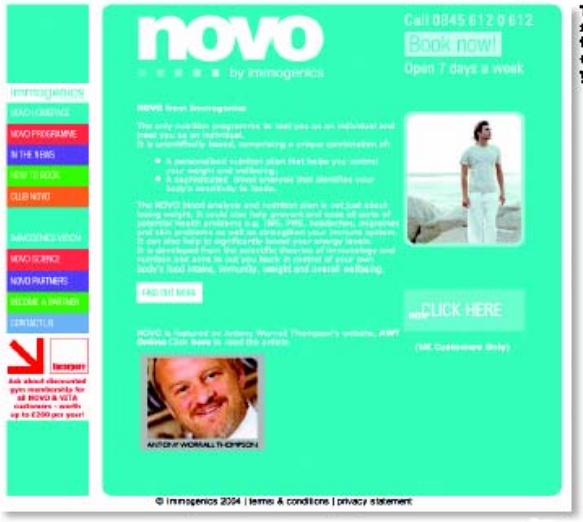

The appliance of science – an easy to use website could help sort out your food allergies

bacteria and problem foods. When activated, white blood cells change shape, release certain chemicals or die and this is what the NOVO test is checking for. If a response is seen in a white blood cell, then a food sensitivity is present and the number of white blood cells involved demonstrate how strong a reaction you have to a particular food. The NOVO also tests for a reaction to candida, a yeast that is present in small amounts in all our bodies. Susie Perry, nutritional therapist at Smart Nutrition, says: 'If candida gets out of control, due to a poor diet high in sugar, alcohol, refined and processed foods, it can be a cause or contributory factor of a leaky gut, which is often seen alongside food intolerances. Both the leaky gut and the candida need to be dealt with.'

Going about it

You can order a test from Immogenics by phone or email. Once you receive your kit through the post, you need to visit your GP to get your blood taken for which there may be a small charge.

Dos and don'ts

Wait ten days after taking antibiotics, if you have a cold, flu or infection before doing the test, since all of these change the way white blood cells work, affecting the results. It is possible other medication can upset the results, so to make sure yours won't it is best to check with the lab first.

Aftercare

Results should be with you within a week. You will receive your own individual diet programme, in-depth help notes, menu planners and some weight monitoring software. Each customer has their own designated NOVO nutritionist who conducts a minimum of three telephone consultations with you ensuring the important stages of the programme are successfully completed to optimise the best results.

Clare Gowing

'fruit was a trigger!'

Symptoms: migraines, loss of sight and feeling down one side. Bloated stomach, low energy and dark circles under eyes.
The results: My trigger list contained several surprises; some fruit and tomatoes, along with mango, cheese, sugar and yeast. Unexpectedly, red wine and coffee were fine but I chose to reduce these anyway.
The new diet? The nutrition team at NOVO helped to keep me motivated. I quickly got used to planning food and reading food labels.
Did it work? I've more energy, a flat stomach and the stomach cramps disappeared. The black bags under my eyes are gone and best of all my migraine triggers are less of a lottery now.

What you really need to know

If you know you have a classic allergy to a particular food, then you should continue to avoid this food whatever the results even though the food may appear on an allowed food list as NOVO doesn't test for specific acute allergic reactions.

Trigger list

Easy to interpret, your trigger list consists of foods that you need to avoid for varying degrees of time depending on how strong your reaction to that particular food was and green foods which you can eat freely.

How long do I have to stay on the diet?

Immogenics recommend that you follow the programme strictly for a minimum of five weeks. GP Dr Sarah Brewer says: 'This helps to ensure that all abnormal immune reactions triggered by food sensitivites have settled down'. After five weeks, you can choose to re-introduce some of the foods at the bottom of your trigger list, but this is just a guideline and you'll have to monitor your progress closely as there is no point cutting out most trigger foods if you are still eating ones that make you feel unwell. There may also be foods which you decide to avoid on a more permanent basis if you feel they are problem foods or make you feel unwell when you eat them. Again, paying close attention to how your body reacts is an important part of changing a lifestyle.

How soon will I feel better?

Some people experience some detox symptoms in the first couple of weeks of the programme but they usually last a few days and are quite mild. You should then begin to feel better.

Reintroducing foods

You can start to reintroduce foods when your symptoms are better. Some people may be ready to re-introduce foods after five weeks other people may still have some way to go. This is absolutely up to the individual and five to ten weeks is only a guideline. You will begin with the food that you react to the least and is found at the bottom of your trigger list. After you eat some of this food you'll have to watch for any symptoms, if none appear you can eat this food daily for the next few days. No symptoms means this particular food is OK for you. You should only reintroduce one food at a time, if symptoms do reappear you need to be clear which food is causing the problem and then continue to avoid it for some more time.

Need a NOVO?

If you fancy giving it a go then call Immogenics on 0845 612 0612 or order the kit online at immogenics.com ☐

Check out our new website at allergymagazine.com

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