

Innovative NOVO

Emma Wells, Nutritional Therapist explores all about the NOVO

What is NOVO

The Novo is a sophisticated blood analysis carried out by Immogenics laboratory that identifies your body's sensitivity and intolerance to 115 different foods.

How can Novo help me

Classic food allergies affect only 2% of adults and up to 8% of children and are generally easy to diagnose as symptoms appear instantly but Allergy UK say that as many as 20% of adults have food intolerances or sensitivities with the most common symptoms being headaches, fatigue, bloating, IBS, diarrhoea, constipation, eczema, psoriasis, a stuffed up or runny nose and arthritis. Identifying food intolerances can be much harder to pin down as symptoms can be multiple and can take as long as 5 days to appear.

This is where the NOVO can help Sally Kappler head nutritionist at Immogenics says "Novo pinpoints foods sensitivities enabling you to eliminate problem foods from the diet and, perhaps more constructively, those that can be eaten with complete freedom"

Simply the science /now for the science/ How does it work/boffin business

White blood cells are the body's defense against anything it perceives as foreign e.g, viruses and bacteria and problem foods. When activated white blood cells change shape, release certain chemicals or actually 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 from 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 and in many cases the food intolerance is cleared.

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.

Do's and Don't's

Wait ten days after taking antibiotics, if you have a cold, flu or infection as all of these change the way the white blood cells work so can affect the results. It is possible other medication can upset the test results so to make sure your medication is not going to interfere with the results it is best to check with the lab first.

Results

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. You also have access to the nutrition support team at Immogenics should you have any questions.

Trigger list

Easy to interpret your trigger list consists of red, orange and yellow 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 period of five weeks. Dr Sarah Brewer says "This helps to ensure that all abnormal immune reactions triggered by food sensitivities have settled down," After 5 weeks you can choose to re-introduce some of the foods at the bottom of your trigger list but this is just a guideline. There may also be foods which you decide to avoid on a more permanent basis should you feel they are the real problem foods or make you feel unwell when you eat them.

Back up

The nutrition support team at Immogenics are happy to help you through any phase of the programme – either helping you to find healthy alternatives or supporting you with reintroducing foods.

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.

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, because NOVO doesn't test for specific acute allergic reactions.

Need a NOVO

Then call immogenics on 0845 612 0612, or book online at immogenics.com

Case history

Name

Claire Gowings

Symptoms

Paralysis migraines – loss of sight and feeling down one side.
Bloated stomach, low energy, dark circles under eyes

The results

My trigger list contained several surprises; some fruit (which I love) and tomatoes which I thought were healthy had to go along with Juniper, cheese, potassium sulphate and MSG. Unexpectedly red wine and coffee were fine but I chose to reduce these anyway.

The new diet

Peanut butter and popcorn saw me through some dark days and regular chats with the nutrition team at Novo helped to keep me motivated. I quickly got used to planning food (thank goodness for the work fridge,) and became an avid label reader. The biggest change for me was switching fruit for vegetables.

Did it work

I have increased energy, a flat stomach and my stomach cramps disappeared. The black bags under my eyes are improved and I have a healthy glow. Best of all I can eat out with my migraine triggers being less of a lottery.