



Roanoke
1505 Franklin Rd. SW
Roanoke, VA 24016
T (540) 343-7331
F (540) 343-7349

Lynchburg
1715 Thomson Dr.
Lynchburg, VA 24501
T (434) 846-2244
F (434) 846-0602

Salem
3529 Keagy Rd.
Salem, VA 24153
T (540) 343-7331
F (540) 725-1356

Foods That Contain Histamine or Cause the Body to Release Histamine

Histamine is a natural substance produced by the body and is also present in many foods. It is released by the body during times of stress and allergy. In an allergic response, an allergen stimulates the release of antibodies, which attach themselves to mast cells. When histamine is released from the mast cells it may cause one or more of the following symptoms:

- Eyes/nose to itch, burn, or become watery
- Skin to itch, develop rashes or hives
- Lungs to wheeze or have spasms
- Stomach to experience cramps and diarrhea

The release of histamine can be caused by almost any allergen. Examples include inhalant allergens (ragweed pollen, dust mite, eat dander), drugs (penicillin, sulfa, aspirin), stinging insect venoms, and foods (egg, wheat, milk, fish, etc).

Histamine-Rich Foods (including fermented foods):

- Alcoholic beverages, especially beer and wine.
- Anchovies
- Avocados
- Cheeses, especially aged or fermented cheese, such as parmesan, blue and Roquefort.
- Cider and home-made root beer.
- Dried fruits such as apricots, dates, prunes, figs and raisins (you may be able to eat these fruits - without reaction - if the fruit is thoroughly washed).
- Eggplant
- Fermented foods, such as pickled or smoked meats, sauerkraut, etc.
- Mackerel
- Mushrooms
- Processed meats - sausage, hot dogs, salami, etc.
- Smoked fish - herring, sardines, etc.
- Sour cream, sour milk, buttermilk, yogurt - especially if not fresh.
- Soured breads, such as pumpernickel, coffee cakes and other foods made with large amounts of yeast.
- Spinach, tomatoes
- Vinegar or vinegar-containing foods, such as mayonnaise, salad dressing, ketchup, chili sauce, pickles, pickled beets, relishes, olives.
- Yogurt
- Tea
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Histamine-Releasing Foods:

- Alcohol
- Bananas
- Chocolate
- Eggs
- Fish
- Milk
- Papayas
- Pineapple
- Shellfish
- Strawberries
- Tomatoes