



# GUSTO GATHERING 2012

Date : Sun, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2012  
Time : 10am - 2pm  
Venue: NUHS Tower Block, Level 1  
1E Kent Ridge Road  
Singapore 119228  
(Kent Ridge MRT Exit A)



**Special Address**  
by Professor Sir Peter  
Gluckman

- ❖ Executive Board, GUSTO
- ❖ Programme Director, Growth, Development and Metabolism Programme, Singapore Institute for Clinical Sciences (SICS), A\*STAR
- ❖ Chief Science Advisor, Office of the Prime Minister's Science Advisory Committee, New Zealand

For enquiries/directions and registration please call/SMS our GUSTO Hotline at [9367 8944](tel:93678944) or email [info@gusto.sg](mailto:info@gusto.sg) with your name, NRIC and contact details.

Baby   
Pageant

♥ FREE Admission ♥  
Limited Seats!  
Please RSVP by  
16<sup>th</sup> March 2012

- ❖ Parent & Baby Look-a-like Contest
- ❖ Baby Best Dressed Contest

Prizes to  
be WON!

To take part in the Baby Pageant for:

- ❖ Parent & Baby Look-a-like Contest
  - Please send a photo of your child and you to [info@gusto.sg](mailto:info@gusto.sg) along with your name & NRIC, child's name & NRIC.
- ❖ Baby Best Dressed Contest
  - Please come in your Sunday Best!

# Allergies: Itchy, Wheezy, Sneezy?

**Your 18-month Clinic Visit may just have an answer for you**

Allergies are diseases of the *immune system* that are the result of an over-reaction to substances called "*allergens*." Some of us who suffer from allergies, will be very familiar with some of the following:

- ❖ Frustration and lack of sleep due to a blocked nose
- ❖ Waking up in the middle of the night because of itchiness
- ❖ Wearing long sleeves to hide rashes and scars
- ❖ Non-stop sneezing leading to teary eyes and headaches
- ❖ Itching and scratching all over
- ❖ Feeling irritated by the itch that never seems to go away
- ❖ Constant need for a box or packet of tissue paper on hand.



"Ahchoo!"

Allergies are part of daily life for some people. In most cases, allergies can cause mild discomfort. However, allergies can be lethal in some cases. It is not something that a simple drug can cure, and allergies can last for a lifetime.

Asthma, eczema, and allergic rhinitis are common among children in Singapore:

- ❖ 1 in 5 children has asthma (Health Promotion Board, 2007)
- ❖ 5.8% increase in eczema in children aged 6-7, between 1994 and 2001 (Wang, et al., 2003)
- ❖ Nearly 1 in 8 children (13%) has perennial rhinitis (National University Hospital survey, 2010)

Knowledge is nothing without understanding and right application of solutions. Here at GUSTO, we strive to understand the different stages of a child's growth and development. With your active participation as a GUSTO family, we aim to better understand these pressing problems with allergies. *We cannot prevent allergies, but with better understanding, we can seek to control it.* Your participation will contribute to the development of solutions to ease the lives of sufferers. Thank you for your understanding and patience with GUSTO. You are playing a part in helping us improve the future for Singapore, and further afield. We look forward to seeing you at your next home visit or clinic visit. Till then, we wish you good health and a wonderful year ahead!



Condition	At the GUSTO 18-month Clinic Visit
<p><u>Asthma</u></p> <p>A pair of adult lungs contains about 2,400km of airways! When you have asthma, these airways get blocked part way and clogged with mucus. It may cause difficulty breathing, wheezing, coughing and chest tightness. Asthma can be triggered by exercise, stress, allergies to house dust mites, pets, mould, etc.</p>	<p><u>Medical examination</u></p> <p>A doctor who specializes in treating allergies, will examine your child, understand his/her medical history and advise GUSTO parents, as appropriate.</p>

## Condition

## At the GUSTO 18-month Clinic Visit

### Eczema

Eczema is long-term skin disorder that involves scaly and itchy rashes, where a hypersensitive reaction in the skin, leads to swelling and redness of the skin. Eczema shows in our children as skin lesions on the face, scalp, hands and feet, with crusting, bubbling, or oozing rashes that itch, or rashes behind the knees and the inner fold of the elbows, as well as other parts of the body.

Eczema is prevalent in babies whose family members have allergic disorders. However, not all eczema sufferers have a family history of eczema.

Symptoms of eczema include dry skin and red rash around the cheeks. These usually start in the first 6 months of age and improve between the ages of 3 to 5 years old.

Teething, dry skin and temperature changes are some of the triggers of eczema. Constant exposure to soap, grease or chemicals may damage the protective layer of the skin giving rise to eczema. Spicy food and curries are common food triggers as well.

### Skin prick test

A doctor will conduct a skin prick test on your child, at the 18-month Clinic Visit. It consists of a few drops of common allergens such as cow's milk, egg, peanut and dust mites. These allergens are introduced to the skin with a light scratching procedure and are left to develop for 15 minutes, after which, a report will be drafted for you *on the spot*, with information about your child's allergic triggers.



*Skin Prick Test carefully executed*

### Allergic Rhinitis

This is collection of symptoms including itchy nose, mouth, eyes & throat, stuffy or runny nose, sneezing, tearing eyes, coughing, sore throat, headache and more. It is triggered by allergens like dust, animal dander, mold & pollen. Symptoms often appear in childhood or adolescence. In severe cases, allergic rhinitis sufferers may develop asthma.

### Nasal swabs

As a GUSTO parent, you must be very familiar with the nasal swab that our friendly Home Visitors have been carrying out on your child. These swabs are part of the GUSTO rhinitis study. It is a common medical procedure to gain samples of respiratory viruses which may play a part in allergic rhinitis. These swabs will still be conducted at the 18-month Clinic Visit by a doctor. Clinic staff are also on hand to ensure that your child is comfortable during the swab - which takes less than 10 seconds.



*Nasal Swab: done in 10 seconds!*

Special thanks to the GUSTO Allergy Team from KKH & NUH: Prof Hugo Van Bever, A/Prof Anne Goh, Dr. Teoh Oon Hoe, Prof Lee Bee Wah, A/Prof Lynette Shek, Prof Daniel Goh, Dr Genevieve Llanora, Dr Irvin Gerez, Dr. Chiang Wem Chin, Dr Sheila Jane Casia, Ms Marites Pasion, Mdm Laycano Melinda Dela Rosa, Ms Bautista Fatima Yturriaga, Ms Corrine Kwek, Mr Anthony Hardjojo for their kind contributions to the writing of this article

## Dear Doris

## Breastfeeding Q&A



*Mrs Doris Fok nee Ms Doris Loh served as the first Asian Ambassador in the International Lactation Consultants' Association (ILCA) and was the first Asian representative in the International Board of Certifying Lactation Consultants' Examiners (IBCLCE). Armed with a wealth of experience engaging mothers from all walks of life over 27 years, Doris is now manager of the GUSTO Home Visit team.*

**Q: Is it advisable to continue breastfeeding if the current pregnancy is found to be complicated. I have suffered a previous miscarriage and would like to know how to proceed.**

It is best to work with your obstetrician, regarding your wish to continue breastfeeding while pregnant. To avoid this situation in the future, it is probably best to consider weaning the baby off, before you start working on your next conception.

**Q: How do I get my baby to eat well?**

Babies do go through "fads" and seem to prefer one kind of food for a period of time. The caregiver will need to experiment to introduce one food at a time, while making it a pleasurable and sociable experience. It would be ideal if the baby or toddler can learn to sit and eat at the dinner table with the rest of the family.

**Q: My baby refuses to drink milk. For example, he drank just 130ml today. Should I consult a doctor? My baby is now 13 months old, and this problem started a month ago.**

If your baby seems more interested in other foods other than breast milk, it's ok. Just breastfeed him whenever he wants to, instead of forcing him to do so.

His nutritional needs can also be met by other foods. As he is over 1 year-old, he could progress to foods that are more like our adult diet.

## **Your Questions & Feedback are Important to us!**

If you have something you would like to tell or ask us, please feel free to call our GUSTO Hotline at **9367 8944** or email us at **[info@gusto.sg](mailto:info@gusto.sg)**.

We look forward to hearing from you!



## **Newsletter Team**

### **Advisors**

Prof Saw Seang Mei  
A/Prof Kenneth Kwek  
A/Prof Chong Yap Seng  
Prof Hugo Van Bever

### **Editors**

Ms Cherissa Ong (Communications)  
Ms Moira Khaw (Communications)

### **Team**

Mr Jay Kaelash (Senior Manager)  
Ms Lakshmi Grandhim (Senior Assistant Manager)  
Ms Doreen Ng (Administration)  
Ms June Nyang (Finance)  
Mrs Doris Fok (Home Visit Manager)  
Dr Iris Shen Zhe (Operations)  
Ms Janie Foo (Operations)  
Dr Eddy Leman (Research)  
Dr Soh Shu E (Research)  
Dr Mya Thway Tint (Research)  
Dr Cai Shirong (Research)  
Dr Pang Wei Wei (Research)