

# Supporting someone with MCAS as a Dietitian

Mast Cell Activation Syndrome (MCAS) is a complex, often misunderstood condition in which mast cells release mediators inappropriately, leading to a wide range of symptoms across multiple body systems. For many people with MCAS, food can be both a source of nourishment and a significant trigger for symptoms, creating unique and sometimes overwhelming challenges around eating.

As a dietitian, your role in supporting someone with MCAS is vital. You may be one of the few professionals helping them navigate food safely while aiming to maintain nutritional balance, improve quality of life, and reduce anxiety around eating. This guide is designed to help you better understand the condition, build a person-centred approach to care, and feel more confident when working with individuals affected by MCAS.

## What research do we have on diet and MCAS?

- There are no large-scale, high-quality clinical trials to date that look at the dietary intake of those with MCAS.
- One peer reviewed journal article on diet and MCAS 'Nutritional Implications of Mast Cell Diseases' Harris et al November 2024



**Access  
Mast Cell Action's  
Self-Management  
Toolkit**

## Common issue's that Dietitian's may support those with MCAS with:



**Malnutrition &  
nutrient deficiencies**



**Weight gain  
and/or high  
BMI**



**Identifying  
food triggers**



**Fear of food/  
disordered eating**



**Non-oral  
feeding**



**Managing diet with  
chronic fatigue**



**Management of  
gut symptoms**



**Primary  
allergies**



**Support with diets  
such as the low  
histamine diet/low  
FODMAP diet**



**Implementing dietary advice for co-  
existing conditions e.g. gastroparesis,  
PoTS and MCAS**



**Access  
Mast Cell Action's  
Symptom log**

## The role of Dietitians supporting those with MCAS

- Spot potential signs of MCAS and refer to appropriate medical support
- Expand the diet and increase tolerance to food
- Support with achieving/maintaining of a healthy body weight
- Identify food triggers
- Consider if supplementation is needed for nutritional adequacy or to downregulate reactions
- Screen for disordered eating

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## Things to consider when seeing someone with MCAS



Is there a history of medical trauma?



Are they being medically supported and do they need additional medications to help broaden their diet?



How can we identify their dietary triggers?



Is there a way we can broaden their diet without de-stabilising symptoms?



Any symptoms of a primary allergy and has this been ruled out?



Is their diet nutritionally balanced?



Are they taking any potentially helpful or potentially unhelpful supplements?



Join the MCAS Dietitian's interest group

## Where to start with a nutritional assessment for someone with MCAS

- Appointments often need A LOT more time
- Detailed nutritional assessment
- Use a food and symptom diary (if no history of disordered eating); consider recording external factors, e.g. menstruation, environmental exposures, stress, exercise
- Avoid standard recommendations and resources. **PERSONALISATION IS KEY**
- Individual, practical recommendations

## Identifying food triggers can be hard!

Reacting to a food on a particular day does not mean they will always react to that food. This can vary depending on:



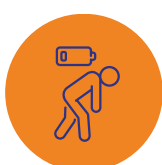
Hormonal status



Medications



Stress



Lack of sleep



Environment



What else has added to the 'mast cell mediator bucket'?



Sign up to our webinar for Dietitians

With special thanks to Chloe Hall and Nishti Udeh from Mast Cell Action's Dietetic Advisory Board for their expertise in creating this resource. Find more resources at [www.mastcellaction.org](http://www.mastcellaction.org)