

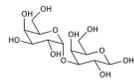
# Alpha-gal Syndrome Fact Sheet



## What is alpha-gal syndrome (AGS)?



- Alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) is a serious, potentially life-threatening allergic condition. AGS is also called alpha-gal allergy, red meat allergy, or tick bite meat allergy. AGS is not caused by an infection. AGS symptoms occur after people eat red meat or are exposed to other products containing alpha-gal.



- Alpha-gal (galactose- $\alpha$ -1,3-galactose) is a sugar molecule found in most mammals. Alpha-gal is not found in fish, reptiles, birds, or people.



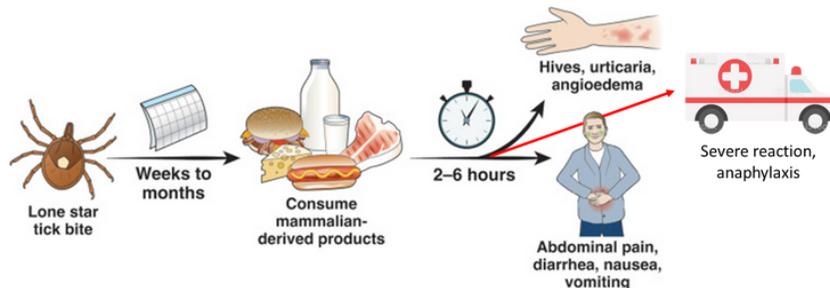
- Alpha-gal can be found in meat (pork, beef, rabbit, lamb, venison, etc.), as well as cow's milk, and milk products.



- Non-food products made from mammals (including glycerin, heparin, magnesium stearate, additives to specific vaccines, heart valves from pigs or cows, monoclonal antibodies, and certain antivenoms) may contain alpha-gal.



- A CDC report showed that between 2010 and 2022, more than 110,000 suspected cases of AGS were identified.\* However, this number might be underestimated.



## Can I get AGS from a tick bite?



- Yes.** AGS is associated with tick bites. Evidence suggests that AGS is primarily associated with the bite of a lone star tick in the United States, but other kinds of ticks have not been ruled out. Other tick species have been connected with the development of AGS in other countries.

## Who gets AGS?



- Anyone can get AGS. Most reported cases of AGS in the United States are among people living in the South, East, and Central United States.



- While people in all age groups can develop AGS, most cases have been reported in adults.



- AGS reactions can include general allergic reactions such as :
  - Hives, itching, or itchy, scaly skin.
  - Swelling of the lips, face, tongue, throat, or other body parts.
  - Wheezing or shortness of breath.
  - Stomach pain, diarrhea, upset stomach or vomiting.

**AGS can be severe, and even life-threatening. Seek immediate emergency care if you are having a severe allergic reaction. Emergent, lifesaving medications containing alpha-gal should not be withheld. Providers should be prepared to manage potential allergic response/anaphylaxis. Individualized care decisions may be required.**

**Patients who have AGS are encouraged to wear a medical bracelet and have an identification alert card for Emergency Medical Services (EMS).**

**For more information visit <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/alpha-gal/index.html>.**