



State Govt gives \$50,000 for food allergy campaign

MELBOURNE — The Lane family was eating out at a pancake restaurant when their 11-month-old daughter Belle's face started to swell and turn a deep shade of red.

The family had specifically ordered egg-free hash browns, as Belle was still under 12 months old, but her reaction was fast and fierce.

"Basically, within minutes her face had swelled up into very swollen, very red rashes and she was clearly very distressed, crying inconsolably," her mother, Erica, said yesterday.

Belle was rushed to the emergency department and diagnosed with an allergy to egg.

At the age of three, she was

also found to be allergic to nuts and sesame seeds.

Now the family rarely eats out, but when they do, Belle's carefully home-cooked food is taken to the restaurant and the family requests staff heat it up, without transferring it to another plate.

The Victorian government yesterday committed \$50,000 to a test program involving several local councils, to educate hospitality staff about allergies and food handling.

Announcing the funding, Victorian Health Minister Daniel Andrews said local government did most of the legwork in terms of food handling.

"We will support them to

educate, to train, to raise a proper level of ongoing awareness of these matters with those who actually handle food," he said.

The charity set up by late Crazy John's mobile phone entrepreneur John Ilhan, Ilhan Food Allergy Foundation, yesterday released the results of a nationwide survey which found one third of households have a person who suffers from a food allergy.

The research, which surveyed 1386 people across Australia, found that about 29 per cent of households had at least one person with a food allergy. — AAP