

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

A food allergy is when a person's immune system thinks a certain food is harmful, and the person can become ill whenever the food is eaten. A reaction will occur every time that food is eaten.



DID YOU KNOW?

- 1 in 10 adults have a food allergy¹.
- 1 in 12 children are affected by food allergens¹.
- BAHFSA identifies shellfish, milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, soybean, fish, sesame and wheat as priority allergens.

FOOD ALLERGENS CAN KILL 

REFERENCES

1. Tanno and Demoly (2022). Food Allergy in the World Health Organization's International Classification of Disease {ICD}-11: Pediatric Allergy and Immunology Journal; 33(11)

MOST COMMON FOOD ALLERGENS



- Shellfish 
- Milk 
- Eggs 
- Peanuts 
- Tree nuts (e.g. walnuts, cashews, almonds and pecans) 
- Soybean 
- Fish 
- Sesame 
- Wheat 

Other foods have also been known to trigger allergic reactions, for example, in Europe, celery, lupin, mustard and sulphite-containing foods are considered food allergens.

DO YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW HAVE AN ALLERGY?

Tips For Handling Your Allergies

BE READY!!!

- Always carry your allergy medications (e.g. epinephrine auto-injectors(s), antihistamines, inhalers, or other doctor-recommended treatments).
- Wear a medical bracelet outlining your medical condition(s).
- In case of accidental exposure, seek immediate medical attention.

BE INFORMED

- Always ask the food provider(s) if food contains or may contain allergens.
- Always check the ingredients list on food packaging and menus.
- Ask about allergen restrictions and prepare accordingly, when planning activities involving food and sharing allergenic foods with others.
- Avoid buffets and salad bars where cross-contact with food allergens may occur.

OBSERVE SAFE FOOD PRACTICES

- Wash hands carefully when handling food.
- Store and prepare allergenic foods away from non-allergenic foods.
- Clean as you go!!
- Practice 5 Keys to Safer Food

BE YOUR OWN ADVOCATE

- Let your food provider know about your food allergies.
- Let persons who are close to you (e.g., family, friends, co-workers, classmates, housemates) know about your allergies, and what to do in an emergency.

EDUCATE CHILDREN ABOUT FOOD ALLERGIES

TELL THEM NOT TO SHARE FOOD WITH OTHERS, NOT EVEN THEIR FRIENDS.



SOME WAYS TO IDENTIFY ALLERGENS IN FOOD

- it is stated in the name, e.g. Buttermilk.
- the food appears in a circular icon.
- the food is underlined or bolded in the ingredients list.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF AN ALLERGIC REACTION

MILD SYMPTOMS

- **Nose:** Runny nose, sneezing.
- **Mouth:** Itching, tingling, swollen lips, tongue and/or mouth
- **Skin:** Hives, itchy rash, swelling of face or body parts.
- **Abdomen (belly/tummy):** Vomiting, nausea, cramps, diarrhea



Antihistamines may be used if you develop mild symptoms; speak to your pharmacist or a medical professional to see if this is right for you.

COMPLICATED SYMPTOMS

- **Throat:** Tightening of throat (feeling like something is stuck in your throat), trouble swallowing, hoarseness/voice changes or cough.
- **Lung:** Cough, wheeze, labored breathing.
- **Heart:** Blue skin, fainting, fast heart rate.
- **Other:** Feeling something bad is going to happen.

If you develop any of the symptoms above after being exposed or suspected of being exposed to an allergen, you may be experiencing anaphylaxis (a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction). Use your epinephrine auto-injector and seek medical attention immediately.

FOOD ALLERGIES ARE NO JOKE.....

Food Business Operators have a responsibility to warn consumers of allergens in foods and must take all actions to protect and offer safe food for consumption.

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