



Traveling to Brazil With Food Allergies

Food allergies don't have to stop you from traveling. Whether traveling for business or pleasure, careful preparation and communication will help make your trip safe and enjoyable. This guide provides some helpful tips for traveling to Brazil as well as information on understanding food labels and dining out at restaurants.

Medication

EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTORS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR SALE IN BRAZIL

Bring a kit with all your medications, including extra epinephrine auto-injectors. Also carry an Emergency Care Plan that outlines recommended treatment in case of an allergic reaction, is signed by a physician and includes emergency contact information. You can download a copy of FARE's Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan at foodallergy.org/faap. Be sure to bring extra copies with you and keep your plan in a place where others can find it. It is important that you and your travel companions understand what to do in case of an emergency.

Understand policies for carrying medication on board the aircraft. You can keep the medication with you in the cabin. You may need to show the printed label that identifies the medication. You may also wish to carry with you a prescription for the medication translated into English. Have your doctor complete a Travel Plan that confirms your food allergy and travel requirements. The Travel Plan of the International Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Alliance may be downloaded at foodallergy.org/travelplan.

Emergencies

ADMINISTER EPINEPHRINE. DIAL 1-9-2 FOR PUBLIC HOSPITAL, OR DIAL PRIVATE HOSPITAL OF CHOICE.

Always keep your medication with you and easily accessible in the event of an emergency. Let your travel companions know about your allergies so they know what to do in case of an emergency and where all your medications, including your auto-injectors, are located.

In the event of an emergency, administer epinephrine immediately. It is critical not to delay administering epinephrine. Next, contact emergency services for an ambulance transport to the hospital emergency department. Dial 1-9-2 for local public health care, or call a private hospital of your choice directly. Most public service ambulances are not equipped with epinephrine so be sure to inform the dispatcher that epinephrine may be needed. It is important to remain at the hospital for at least four hours of observation because symptoms may return.

Familiarize yourself with the local emergency services phone number and dialing procedures. For example, some hotels may have specific procedures for dialing 1-9-2 from your room. Be aware of your location so that you can give the dispatcher specific information. Also, familiarize yourself with where the nearest emergency department is located. Ask for a recommendation at the hotel where you are staying or from friends that live in Brazil.

Keep in mind that, even though there is a public health care system in Brazil, you may want to purchase international health insurance that covers ambulance service prior to your trip. Private emergency care can be costly, and you should be able to access funds while abroad.

Understanding Food Labels in Brazil

Reading food labels on packaged food is an important part of managing food allergies and avoiding your allergen. Federal regulation in Brazil (RDC n. 26/15) requires that the labels of pre-packed foods manufactured on or after July 3, 2016 that contain certain food allergens must note the allergen in plain language. This rule **does not include** foods produced in restaurants or bars, packaged foods that have been broken into portions for resale, cosmetics, hygiene products and medicines.

In Brazil, the use of advisory labeling ("ALLERGIC: MAY CONTAIN...") on pre-packed foods that was manufactured on or after July 3, 2016 is required by legislation.

18 allergens must be identified:	
At the end of the ingredient list with the wording "ALÉRGICOS: CONTÉM" followed by the name of the major food allergen	Example: "ALLERGIC: CONTAINS MILK, WHEAT"
Precautionary statements "ALÉRGICOS: PODE CONTER"	Example: "ALLERGIC: MAY CONTAIN EGG"



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The 18 allergens that must be declared in foods manufactured on or after July 3, 2016 are:

- wheat, rye, barley, oats and their hybridized strains •
- crustaceans • eggs • fish • peanuts • soybeans • milk of all mammals • natural latex •
- almonds • hazelnuts • cashew nut • Brazil nut (pará) • macadamias • walnuts • pecans • pistachios • pine nuts • chestnuts •

Please be aware the allergens labeled in Brazil may differ from those in other countries. For example, the European Union has identified 14 allergens that must be declared on pre-packed food labels, and 10 major allergens have been identified in Canada.

Although this Brazilian federal law will make label reading easier, it was passed only recently. Pre-packed food that was processed before the law came into effect will remain available at groceries stores until its expiration date. Therefore, those managing food allergies should read all labels on all packages carefully every time. If you find the label confusing, you can contact customer service for information about the product. For an English-language guide on how to read food labels, please visit foodallergy.org/foodlabels. A Portuguese-language guide is available at poenorotulo.com.br/CartilhaAlergiaAlimentar_29AGO.pdf.

Snacks and Meals

It is recommended that you travel with non-perishable food that is safe for you to eat in case you are unable to find allergen-free foods while traveling. Good options include dried pasta and snack bars that are free of your allergen. If you plan on staying in a hotel, consider staying in one that has a small kitchen or a refrigerator and microwave to store and prepare safe meals and snacks. Carefully clean all utensils, equipment and surfaces before first use. You may be able to purchase some of the same products in Brazil as you can back home, but remember that the same product manufactured in different countries can contain different ingredients.

Dining Out at Restaurants

When you are dining out with food allergies, planning ahead is important. Consider choosing chain restaurants. Each restaurant is likely to use the same ingredients and prepare foods the same way, and a growing number are allergy-aware. Before you go to the restaurant, there are some steps you can take to see if a particular restaurant is a good choice for you. Many restaurants have websites and post their menus online for you to review ahead of time. You can also call the restaurant and ask to speak to the chef or manager about your food allergies, menu items and meal preparation. We recommend calling during off-peak hours.

Communication between restaurants and customers with food allergies is essential to a safe dining experience. The restaurant manager and wait staff should know about your food allergy. Remind a manager or the head waiter about your allergies before you are seated. In addition to asking questions about the ingredients and preparation methods, carry a "chef card" that outlines the foods you must avoid. Present the card to the chef or manager for review.

Chef cards can be downloaded in English and nine other languages at foodallergy.org/diningout.

When selecting your meal, keep it simple. If you have to ask complicated questions about the items on a menu, simple fare may be the safest. Be sure to ask what is in your dish and how is it prepared. It is important that the restaurant understands what you are allergic to and takes steps to avoid cross-contact. You may want to speak to the manager and the chef, just to be sure.

Remember, never be embarrassed if you feel you are not communicating effectively. If you think a member of the wait staff does not to understand your situation, always trust your instincts and seek out another staff member or manager. Sometimes, the safest choice is to avoid eating, and find a safe meal somewhere else.

Resources

www.poenorotulo.com.br/

Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan: foodallergy.org/faap

Epinephrine Auto-Injectors: foodallergy.org/epinephrine

Reading Food Labels: foodallergy.org/foodlabels; poenorotulo.com.br/CartilhaAlergiaAlimentar_29AGO.pdf

International Travel Plan: foodallergy.org/travelplan



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