










**FARE**<sup>®</sup>  
It's good for everyone.

# Recognize and Respond to Anaphylaxis

For a suspected or active food allergy reaction





FOR ANY OF  
THE FOLLOWING

## SEVERE SYMPTOMS

-  **LUNG:** Short of breath, wheezing, repetitive cough
-  **HEART:** Pale or bluish skin, faintness, weak pulse, dizziness
-  **THROAT:** Tight or hoarse throat, trouble breathing or swallowing
-  **MOUTH:** Significant swelling of the tongue or lips
-  **SKIN:** Many hives over body, widespread redness
-  **GUT:** Repetitive vomiting, severe diarrhea
-  **OTHER:** Feeling something bad is about to happen, anxiety, confusion

OR MORE  
THAN ONE

## MILD SYMPTOM

-  **NOSE:** Itchy or runny nose, sneezing
-  **MOUTH:** Itchy mouth
-  **SKIN:** A few hives, mild itch
-  **GUT:** Mild nausea or discomfort

**1 ADMINISTER  
EPINEPHRINE  
IMMEDIATELY**

**2 Call 911**  
Request ambulance  
with epinephrine.

### Consider Additional Meds

(After epinephrine):

- » Antihistamine
- » Inhaler (bronchodilator) if asthma

### Positioning

Lay the person flat and raise legs. If breathing is difficult or they are vomiting, let them sit up or lie on their side.

### Next Steps

- » If symptoms do not improve, or symptoms return, more doses of epinephrine can be given about 5 minutes or more after the last dose.
- » Transport to and remain in ER for at least 4 hours because symptoms may return.

Do not depend on antihistamines. When in doubt, give epinephrine and call 911.

# How to Avoid Cross-Contact With Food Allergens

This sheet will help you avoid cross-contact and prevent a food allergy reaction.



## What is cross-contact?

Cross-contact is when an unsafe food (the allergen) mixes with a safe food (food that does not contain the allergen). When this happens the safe food then contains tiny amounts of the unsafe food. The amounts can be so small that you cannot see them. Even if you cannot see the allergen, you can still have an allergic reaction to it.

## What's the difference between cross-contact and cross-contamination?

Cross-contamination is when bacteria or viruses get in your food and make it unsafe to eat. When this happens, cooking the food removes the bacteria or virus and lowers your chances of getting sick.

This is not the same as cross-contact with food allergens. **The cooking process does not remove allergens from food.**

## What are some examples of cross-contact?



- **Direct cross-contact:** For example, if croutons are added to a salad, then taken out, direct cross-contact has occurred and the food allergen remains on the other ingredients.



- **Indirect cross-contact:** A cooking utensil, hands, or a food-preparation surface that has or had the food you are allergic to on it is used to prepare a safe food—one you are not allergic to. Now the safe food has unsafe food in it.

## What can you do to prevent cross-contact?

### To prevent cross-contact:

- ✓ Always read food labels to ensure the allergen is not present in the food before you start.
- ✓ Wash utensils, cutting boards, and cooking pans with soap and water before and after you use them.
- ✓ Use separate utensils and dishes for allergy-safe foods. You can use a different color for safe kitchen tools.
- ✓ Cook allergy-safe foods first if you need to cook several foods.
- ✓ Keep allergy-safe foods covered and away from other foods.
- ✓ If you make a mistake, you cannot remove an allergen from a meal. Even a trace amount of cross-contact makes a food unsafe. You must start again.
- ✓ If you touch an allergen, wash your hands with soap and water before you touch anything else. Hand sanitizer or water by itself will not remove allergens.
- ✓ Clean counters and tables with soap and water or disinfectant cleaner and single-use (or disposable) towel. Wash all utensils, pots, and pans in dishwasher or use hot water and soap. Let them air dry.
- ✓ Do not share food, drinks, or utensils. Teach children not to share these when they are at school or with friends.

## What are the most common food allergens in the U.S.?

In the U.S. there are 9 major food allergens that cause about 90% of reactions, but a person could be allergic to any food. The top allergens include:

- Crustacean Shellfish (This includes shrimp, crab, or lobster but not scallops, clams, mussels, or oysters)
- Egg
- Finned fish (such as tuna or salmon)
- Milk
- Peanuts
- Tree nuts (such as almond, cashew, or walnut)
- Sesame
- Soy
- Wheat



To learn more about keeping safe with food allergies, go to: <https://www.foodallergy.org/living-food-allergies>

# Safely Dining Out with Food Allergies

Be mindful of your food allergy when you go out to eat at a restaurant. You could be exposed to foods you are allergic to through cross-contact. This happens when your safe food comes into contact with your allergen food. Follow these tips to help avoid food that you are allergic to at restaurants.



## Pick an allergy-safe restaurant.

- 1. Ask your allergy doctor and others you know with food allergies about where to go.**
- 2. Consider chain restaurants.** They have many locations, and often use the same menu with the same ingredients prepared the same way. Also, many of them train staff to make food for diners with food allergies.
- 3. AVOID restaurants with a high risk for allergen exposure, such as:**
  - X Buffets where many are foods close to each other.** This increases the risk for cross-contact.
  - X Bakeries since many items contain common allergens and are not wrapped separately.** This allows allergens to come into contact with other foods.
  - X Restaurants that serve pre-made foods.** The staff may not know all the ingredients in the food and may not be able to adjust the recipe to avoid allergens.
  - X Restaurants that use allergens in most of their foods.** For example, if you are allergic to fish or shellfish, you may want to avoid seafood restaurants.

## Prepare before you go to the restaurant.

- **Check restaurant menus before you go.**
- **Call ahead to talk to the manager.** Find tips and questions to ask when you call restaurants at: [foodallergy.org/resources/calling-restaurants](https://foodallergy.org/resources/calling-restaurants). Pick a day and time when the restaurant is not busy.
- **If possible, plan for an early meal.** The best time is either during the first hour the restaurant is open or the first hour they are serving dinner. The staff is alert, and the kitchen is cleaner.



“I always call a new restaurant before we go. It’s so important to know if they can accommodate my family’s food allergies.”

- **Get chef cards.** These are wallet-sized cards that list your food allergies for restaurant staff. They also give instructions on how to prepare your food to avoid cross-contact. You can make your own or download a template at: [foodallergy.org/resources/food-allergy-chef-cards](https://foodallergy.org/resources/food-allergy-chef-cards).



- **Pack any medicines you may need if you have a reaction.**

You should always carry two epinephrine delivery systems (such as neffy® or Auvi-Q®).

## Tell restaurant staff what you need so you can eat safely.

- **Talk to restaurant staff about your food allergy.**
  - Ask the food server for food options that meet your needs.
  - Ask your server what is in your food and how it is prepared.
  - Explain to the manager and kitchen staff that they must avoid cross-contact.
- **Give your server your chef card and ask that they give it to the cook.**
- **Reward great service.** If you have a good experience, thank the staff and let them know you plan to visit again.
- **When you order food:**
  - Choose simple foods with nothing added to them (such as baked potatoes, broiled chicken, or steamed vegetables)
  - Avoid grilled and fried foods unless you can confirm that your allergen food is not cooked on the same grill or fryer.
  - Be careful when you order desserts. Restaurant staff may not know the ingredients if they are not made by the restaurant. And they may have allergens without you knowing it.

**If the restaurant staff do not understand your food allergy, you may choose not to eat there.**

Find more information on living safely with food allergies at [FoodAllergy.org](https://FoodAllergy.org).

**Remember, you are your best advocate!**



# How to Read Food Labels if You Have Food Allergies

You must read the labels of all foods you eat to make sure they do not include foods or ingredients you are allergic to. This sheet will help you read and understand food labels.



## What major food allergens **MUST** be listed on the food label?



In the U.S. there are 9 major food allergens that must be listed. These include:

- Crustacean Shellfish (includes shrimp, crab, or lobster but not scallops, clams, mussels, or oysters)
- Egg
- Finned fish (such as tuna or salmon)
- Milk
- Peanuts
- Tree nuts (such as almond, cashew, or walnut)
- Sesame
- Soy
- Wheat

## What foods **MUST** have major food allergens listed on the label?

All **packaged** foods sold in the U.S. are required by law to list the major food allergen ingredient if they:

- Have an ingredient that is a major food allergen
- Include a major food allergen as part of another listed ingredient in the food, such as spice mix or flavoring

**INGREDIENTS:** Enriched unbleached flour (wheat flour, malted barley flour, ascorbic acid [dough conditioner], niacin, reduced iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), sugar, natural flavor.

**CONTAINS:** Wheat.

## What foods **DON'T** need to list major food allergens on the label?

- Fresh foods, such as meats, poultry, fruit, and vegetables
- Restaurant foods wrapped in a carryout package for a customer (this includes bakeries and delis)
- Highly refined oils (even if they come from a major allergen, like peanut oil or soybean oil)

## How are major food allergens shown on food labels?

Food companies have 2 options for how they can include food allergens on labels. Sometimes both options are included on the same label. The options include:

1. Listing the allergen within the ingredient list. Sometimes the allergen's common English name is also included in parentheses. For example: **whey (milk)**.
2. Listing the allergen immediately following the ingredient list using a **"Contains"** statement. When the food allergen is part of a larger group of foods, like tree nuts, the label must also name the specific food included. For example: **Contains: tree nuts (walnut)**.

**INGREDIENTS:** SEMOLINA (WHEAT), DURUM FLOUR (WHEAT), NIACIN, FERROUS SULFATE (IRON), THIAMIN MONONITRATE, RIBOFLAVIN, FOLIC ACID.

**CONTAINS:** WHEAT.

**MANUFACTURED IN A FACILITY THAT USES EGGS.**

Some labels have warnings called precautionary allergen labeling. This includes statements such as **MAY CONTAIN** or **MADE IN A FACILITY WITH**.

Not all food companies use these warnings. Ask your doctor if you should avoid foods with these warnings.

## How can I find out about other ingredients I may be allergic to that are not a major allergen?

If an ingredient is not one of the top 9 allergens it may not be listed in the ingredient list by its common name. **For example, corn may be listed as maize instead.**

You can always find out more by calling the food company to ask if a product contains certain allergens. Contact information can be found on the food label or the company website. In some cases, the company may not want to share their recipes.

"Reading food labels is so important if you or someone in your family has a food allergy. I tell my patients to read each label 3 times to make sure the food is safe."

1. Read the label **once** – **when you buy it at the store.**
2. Read the label **again** – **when put it away at home.**
3. Read the label a **third time** – **before you eat or serve it.**



Find more information on living safely with food allergies at [FoodAllergy.org](https://www.foodallergy.org).



# How to Prepare Others to Care for Your Child with Food Allergy

This sheet will help you learn ways to keep your child safe while they are at school or with other caregivers.



## How should I work with my child's school to keep them safe?

### Learn about food allergy for yourself.

Before you can plan for your child's care at school, you need to learn about your child's food allergy. You should know and be able to explain:

- The foods your child must avoid.
- The signs of an allergic reaction.
- The role of medication in your child's treatment.
- The right way to use an epinephrine delivery system, such as an auto-injector or nasal spray.

### Learn how your child's school manages food allergy.

Learn the policies and know what you should request. They may already have ways to manage food allergy.

### What should you provide to your school.

At the start of every new school year you should provide: unexpired emergency medications.

- An allergy emergency care plan completed by your child's pediatrician or allergist.

### Learn suggested school guidelines about food allergy.

Read "Food Allergy Safe Schools: The Basics," which is a summary of *Food Allergy Management in Schools (FAMS): Expert Recommendations for K-12*. Find this information and the full expert recommendations on FARE's website: [FoodAllergy.org/FAMS](https://www.foodallergy.org/FAMS)

### Make a plan that keeps your child safe.

Create a written food allergy plan with the school. One example is a 504 Plan.

These plans:

- Outline accommodations, or services that a student with a disability needs to fully join in education. Children with severe food allergies have a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- Are available at public schools and any schools that get money from the government. Parents of children who go to private schools that do not get money from the government can work with the school to set up similar plans. Religious schools may not follow Section 504, but state laws may apply. Ask your child's school how to contact their 504 coordinator who can help.

## How should I work with babysitters and other caregivers to keep my child safe?



### **Explain the allergy, which foods to avoid, and the safety steps you follow at home.**

Be sure to give enough time for the caregiver to learn the information. You may want to meet with them before they care for your child to give them time to ask questions.

### **Explain your child's reaction symptoms and tell the babysitter or caregiver what to do.**

Show them the food allergy reaction symptoms in your Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan.

### **Show them how to use an epinephrine delivery system, and make sure they feel ready to use it.**

Find videos for epinephrine delivery systems on the FARE website: [foodallergy.org/epinephrine](https://foodallergy.org/epinephrine). Consider teaching your caregiver or babysitter how to administer epinephrine using training devices.

### **Tell them to act first and call you later.**

The most important thing they need to do in case of a severe reaction is to administer epinephrine and call 911. If they are not sure what to do, tell them to use epinephrine. Make sure they know you will not be upset with them. Your child's safety is most important.

### **Make it easy to reach you.**

Leave them your cell phone number, as well as the number of at least 1 other person to call.

### **Explain the dangers of cross-contact and how to avoid it.**

Explain that safe food can become unsafe if just a tiny bit of an allergen touches it. This can happen while cooking and preparing food and using shared utensils and food prep/cooking equipment.

### **Teach them how to read labels.**

Practice reading a few labels with them.

### **Don't have them provide your child's meals the first few times.**

Leave a tray of safe foods to give your child while you are out. Or, ask them to arrive after your child has eaten and is ready for bed. This may be less stressful until you feel good about leaving your child with someone else.

### **Write everything down.**

Keep all important information and instructions together in an easy-to-find place. You can use a bright-colored binder in the kitchen. If you do this, make sure all information is up to date.

# How to Create a Food Allergy Safety Zone at Home

Tips to help you make your home safer for people with food allergy.

## What is a food allergy safety zone?

A “food allergy safety zone” is a way to keep certain areas of your home free from food allergens. This will help your family enjoy safe meals together.

## Preparing Allergy-Safe Meals for Your Family

### STEP 1: Start with a Clean Kitchen and Food Prep Space

- **Wash meal prep equipment:** Use warm, soapy water and a single or single-use towel to clean all kitchen equipment, including counter tops and surfaces. **Using something that touches the surface and wipes it clean with friction is most important.** Allow to air dry. This process helps prevent cross-contact from allergens previously present in the space.
- **Consider keeping separate sets of tools:** Use separate utensils for safe and unsafe foods. You can also use separate equipment such as cutting boards, bowls, and pots. Using equipment that is a different color helps to identify which set is used for allergy-safe meals.



### STEP 2: Safely Prepare Food

- **Wash your hands well** (15 to 20 seconds) with soap and water before you start cooking and after handling unsafe foods.
- **Use clean food prep tools and surfaces** to prepare safe foods.
- **Make safe foods first**, before meals for other family members.
- **Serve safe foods immediately** or cover them right away to reduce the chance of cross-contact.
- **More kitchen and cooking safety tips to consider:**
  - ✓ Choose a safe cooking method such as a single pan, not a shared grill.
  - ✓ Food labels can change without notice, so it's good practice to check them consistently, even for products that you use regularly. By reading labels multiple times—at purchase, during storage, and before usage, you can ensure that the product still aligns with your needs and avoid any unexpected ingredients.
  - ✓ Serve allergy-safe meals on special plates.
  - ✓ Aim to cook meals that are safe for the entire family so that the person with a food allergy can always be included.

# WHAT IS CROSS-CONTACT

Cross-contact happens when an allergen touches a safe food. This leaves small bits of allergen in that safe food. Even a tiny amount of an allergen can cause life-threatening reactions in people with food allergies. Here are some examples of cross-contact to AVOID:

- You accidentally add cheese to a plain hamburger and then remove it.
- You leave the lid off a pot that is cooking shrimp and splatter from that pot gets onto safe food.
- You use a knife to put peanut butter on a sandwich and then dip the knife in jelly without cleaning the knife first.
- You use the same spatula to flip fish and also hamburgers on the grill.
- You don't wash your hands after eating an egg sandwich before preparing oatmeal.

## Your Food Allergy Safety Zone Family Checklist

- Teach your family how to read food labels. Learn more about reading food labels correctly at [FoodAllergy.org](https://www.foodallergy.org)
- Ask all family members to wash their hands before and after they eat.
- Label food-allergy safe and unsafe foods. Use colored stickers to tell them apart.
- Keep family members with food allergies out of the kitchen when you cook with their allergens. Some foods, like boiled milk or fried fish, may put allergens in the air when you cook them. Other foods, like powdered milk and wheat flour, can put allergens in the air when they are prepared.

## Should You Remove All Food Allergens from Your Home?

Some families choose to allow food allergens in their home and take careful steps to keep family members with food allergy safe. Other families remove all food allergens. To help you decide what to do, ask yourself these questions:

1. If I were to remove allergen foods, how hard would this be for my family?
2. Are there young kids with food allergy in the home? How much control do they have over the food they eat?
3. How will the decision affect the overall quality of our home life?
4. How will I help my child learn how to manage their food allergy outside the home?
5. How will I teach my child which foods are safe or not?

## Be Prepared for an Emergency

If a reaction happens, what is the care plan? When and how will you use epinephrine to treat an anaphylactic reaction? Where is the medication stored? Discuss all with your household.



# Busting the Myths and Knowing the Facts About Food Allergy



This sheet addresses some of the most common questions about food allergies.

## What Is a Food Allergy?

A food allergy is when your body's immune system reacts to a certain food. Your body thinks that food (the allergen) is a threat and tries to attack it. This response can cause a range of symptoms.

 **Myth: Food allergies are not that serious.**

 **Fact: Food allergies can be a life-threatening disease.**

They are more than just an itch or a stomachache. Food allergy can cause symptoms such as hives, coughing, swelling of the face and tongue, difficulty breathing, and loss of consciousness. Food allergies are not only life-threatening, they are also life-altering. People with food allergy must always be vigilant to avoid foods they are allergic to.



 **Myth: Eating a little bit of a food that you are allergic to won't hurt you.**

 **Fact: Even a trace amount of a food allergen can cause a severe reaction called anaphylaxis in some people.**

The food a person is allergic to must be completely removed from their diet for them to stay safe and live well. Avoiding cross-contact between a safe food and a food allergen is just as important as avoiding the allergen itself. Cross-contact happens when a food that someone is allergic to accidentally touches another safe food someone is going to eat. That food, which was safe, is now dangerous for the person with a food allergy.

## What Is Anaphylaxis (a·nuh·fuh·LAK·suhs)?

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction that can happen after you've been exposed to something you're allergic to, including a food.

 **Myth: Each reaction will get worse and worse.**

 **Fact: Food allergy reactions are unpredictable.**

The way a person's body reacts to a food one time can't predict how they will react the next time. There is no way to know if a reaction is going to be mild, moderate, or severe. People with a food allergy should always be prepared with emergency medication, just in case.

 **Myth: Food allergies are the same as food intolerances.**

 **Fact: Food intolerance does not involve an immune system reaction.**

While food intolerances can cause great discomfort, they are not life-threatening. Food allergy, on the other hand, can be fatal.



**? Myth: If a food allergy test is positive, you have a food allergy.**

**✓ Fact: Positive skin prick or blood test results for a food allergy are not always accurate and can sometimes give “false positive” results.**

This means that the test is “positive” even though you are not allergic to the food being tested. An Oral Food Challenge (OFC) is the gold standard of tests and should be discussed with a board-certified allergist. An OFC happens in the doctor’s office and involves eating the suspected food allergen to see if a reaction happens.

**? Myth: Peanut allergy is the most dangerous food allergy.**

**✓ Fact: No single food allergy poses a greater threat than another.**

While 9 foods account for most food allergies in the U.S., virtually any food can cause an allergic reaction. Even a very small amount of the problem food is enough to cause a reaction.

**? Myth: A food allergy always develops in childhood.**

**✓ Fact: A food allergy can occur at any age, well into adulthood.**

You can even develop an allergy to a food you have safely eaten many times before. In fact, about half of people who have a food allergy to shellfish experience their first allergic reaction as an adult.<sup>1</sup>

**? Myth: Antihistamines will stop an allergic reaction.**

**✓ Fact: Antihistamines (like Benadryl® or Zyrtec®) can help relieve some symptoms like an itchy mouth or skin, but they DO NOT stop anaphylaxis.**

Epinephrine is the only approved medication to stop anaphylaxis and should be given **first** and **fast**.

**? Myth: Once you develop a food allergy, you cannot outgrow it.**

**✓ Fact: It is possible to outgrow your food allergies with age.**

For example, many children outgrow food allergies to milk, soy, eggs, and wheat. However, allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish are less likely to be outgrown.

**? Myth: If you don’t have an allergic reaction within 30 minutes of being exposed to your allergen, you won’t have one.**

**✓ Fact: Symptoms can start within a few seconds of eating a food allergen, but it can take up to 2 hours for symptoms to appear.**

Sometimes, after the first symptoms go away, a second round of symptoms can occur without re-exposure to the allergen. This can happen between 1 and 48 hours after the first symptoms (or sometimes longer), even after treatment has been given.<sup>2</sup> This second set of symptoms is called a biphasic reaction.

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1. Warren CM, Aktas ON, Gupta RS, Davis CM. Prevalence and characteristics of adult shellfish allergy in the United States. J Allergy Clin Immunol. 2019 Nov;144(5):1435-1438.e5. doi: 10.1016/j.jaci.2019.07.031. Epub 2019 Aug 8. PMID: 31401288; PMCID: PMC6842441.

2. Ichikawa M, Kuriyama A, Urushidani S, Ikegami T. Incidence and timing of biphasic anaphylactic reactions: a retrospective cohort study. Acute Med Surg. 2021 Jul 30;8(1): e689. doi: 10.1002/ams2.689. PMID: 34354840; PMCID: PMC8323456.

# How to Use Substitutes for Common Food Allergens

If you have a food allergy, you may have to make changes to your meals. You can replace allergens with safe ingredients. Below are some substitutes for common allergens and foods with common allergens. Always read labels and contact the food company with questions (you can find the company's phone number or email on the label or website.) Some allergen substitutions are other allergens. Be careful not to replace one allergen with another food you are allergic to.



## What should I substitute for cow's milk?

### When you cook or bake with milk:

- Rice, almond, coconut, cashew, hemp, pea, and soy milk are good replacements for cow's milk. Some, like coconut milk, have flavor and may not work for all recipes.
- Choose "enriched" or "fortified" versions. This shows they have added calcium and vitamin D.
- Do not use baby formula. High heat can destroy the nutrients and may cause a bad flavor.

### Milk substitutes are not all the same.

- Soy milk is the most nutritious option. It has almost as much protein, vitamin D, and calcium as cow's milk.
- Rice, cashew, and almond milk are low in protein and fat but can be fortified with calcium and vitamin D.

### Coconut milk drinks and canned coconut milk are not the same.

- Use cold coconut drinks in smoothies, cereal, and coffee.
- Use canned coconut milk in soups and sauces. You can also use it to make whipped cream.

## What should I substitute for butter?

To avoid milk in butter, use milk-free margarine or soy butter. For best results when you bake with margarine, choose one with low water content. Margarine sticks usually have less water than margarine in a tub.

## What should I substitute for yogurt?

### To avoid milk in yogurt, choose yogurts made with:

- Almond milk
- Cashew milk
- Coconut milk
- Oat milk
- Pea-based milk
- Soy milk

Look for yogurt that has calcium added. Soy yogurt is most like milk-based yogurt because it a good source of protein.



## What should I substitute for cheese?

To avoid milk in cheese, pick vegan or veggie cheese. Read the label and avoid brands with ingredients you may be allergic to, such as tree nuts.

## What should I substitute for eggs?

**When you bake, substitute one option below for each egg in a recipe:**

- 1/4 cup of unsweetened applesauce **plus** 1/2 teaspoon of baking powder
- 1/4 cup of mashed banana (there may be a slight banana flavor)
- 1 tablespoon of ground flax seeds **plus** 3 tablespoons of water (mix well before adding to recipe)
- 2 tablespoons of water **plus** 1 tablespoon of oil (vegetable or corn oil) **plus** 2 teaspoons of baking powder

## What should I substitute for wheat?

**Wheat-free starches include:**

- Almond
- Corn
- Millet
- Potato
- Quinoa
- Rice
- Tapioca

You can find many of these as wheat-free flours. Most say you can use the same amount as you would use for wheat flour in recipes. Check the package to make sure.

**To make your own wheat-free flour, mix:**

- 4 cups of super fine brown rice flour
- 1 1/3 cups of potato starch (**not** potato flour)
- 2/3 cup of tapioca flour (may be called tapioca starch)

## What should I substitute for peanuts?

**Instead of peanut butter, use:**

- Soy butter
- Sunflower seed butter
- Tahini (made from sesame)
- Tree nut butters like almond or cashew (only if you do not have a tree nut allergy)

Food companies may make tree nut butters on equipment that touches other tree nuts and peanuts. Contact the company if you have questions.





# Tips for Avoiding Your Allergen

Most packaged foods in the U.S. are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Meat and poultry products are regulated by the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The FDA requires that manufacturers list the nine major allergens in plain English on package labels if the food:

- includes an ingredient that is a major food allergen (milk, wheat, egg, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, crustacean shellfish, soy, and sesame);
- includes an ingredient derived from a major food allergen, such as whey, which is from milk.

An ingredient that is a major food allergen or derived from a major food allergen cannot be used in FDA allowed groupings, such as “spice” or “flavor,” and must be listed separately, such as peanut flavoring.

## For a Wheat-Free Diet

**Avoid foods that contain wheat or any of these ingredients:**

bread crumbs	farina	hydrolyzed wheat protein	sprouted wheat
bulgur	farro	Kamut®	triticale
cereal extract	flour (all purpose, bread, cake, durum, enriched, graham, high gluten, high protein, instant, pastry, self-rising, soft wheat, steel ground, stone ground, whole wheat)	matzoh, matzoh meal (also spelled as matzo, matzah, or matza)	vital wheat gluten
club wheat		pasta	wheat (bran, durum, germ, gluten, grass, malt, sprouts, starch)
couscous		seitan	wheat bran hydrolysate
cracker meal		semolina	wheat germ oil
durum		spelt	wheat grass
einkorn			wheat protein isolate
emmer			

**Wheat is sometimes found in the following:**

glucose syrup	starch (gelatinized starch, modified starch, modified food starch, vegetable starch)	surimi
oats		
soy sauce		

## For an Egg-Free Diet

**Avoid foods that contain eggs or any of these ingredients:**

albumin (also spelled albumen)	eggnog	lysozyme	surimi
egg (dried, powdered, solids, white, yolk)	globulin	mayonnaise	vitellin
	livetin	meringue (meringue powder)	

**Egg is sometimes found in the following:**

baked goods	egg substitutes	lecithin	meatloaf or meatballs
breaded items	fried rice	marzipan	nougat
drink foam (alcoholic, specialty coffee)	ice cream	marshmallows	pasta

**Keep the following in mind:**

- Individuals who are allergic to chicken eggs are often advised not to eat eggs from other birds because the proteins are similar.
- Even though it is the egg white that contains the allergenic proteins, people with egg allergy must avoid eggs completely. The FDA considers eggs from domesticated chickens, ducks, geese, quail, and other birds to be “eggs” for the purpose of food allergen labeling.

## For a Sesame-Free Diet

### Avoid foods that contain sesame or any of these ingredients:

Benne, benne seed, benniseed  
Gingelly, gingelly oil  
Gomasio (sesame salt)  
Halvah

Sesame flour  
Sesame oil\*  
Sesame paste  
Sesame salt

Sesame seed  
Sesamol  
Sesamum indicum  
Sesemolina

Sim sim  
Tahini, Tahina, Tehina Til

\*Because sesame oil is not refined, it is recommended that it be avoided by individuals with sesame allergy.

### Sesame may also be found in non-food items, including:

Cosmetics (including soaps and creams)

Medications  
Nutritional supplements

Pet foods

In non-food items, the scientific name for sesame, *Sesamum indicum*, may be on the label.

## For a Soy-Free Diet

### Avoid foods that contain soy or any of these ingredients:

edamame  
miso  
natto

soy (soy albumin, soy cheese, soy fiber, soy flour, soy grits, soy ice cream, soy milk, soy nuts, soy sprouts, soy yogurt)

soya  
soybean (curd, granules)  
soy protein (concentrate, hydrolyzed, isolate)  
shoyu

soy sauce  
tamari  
tempeh  
textured vegetable protein (TVP)  
tofu

### Soy is sometimes found in the following:

vegetable broth

vegetable gum

vegetable starch

### Keep the following in mind:

- The FDA exempts highly refined soybean oil from being labeled as a food allergen. Studies show most allergic individuals can safely eat soy oil that has been highly refined (not cold pressed, expeller pressed, or extruded soybean oil).
- Most individuals allergic to soy can safely eat soy lecithin.

Follow your doctor's advice regarding these ingredients.

## For a Tree Nut-Free Diet

### Avoid foods that contain tree nuts or any of these ingredients:

almond  
artificial nuts  
beechnut  
Brazil nut  
butternut  
cashew  
chestnut  
chinquapin nut  
filbert/hazelnut

gianduja (a chocolate-hazelnut mixture)  
ginkgo nut  
hickory nut  
litchi/lychee/lychee nut  
macadamia nut  
marzipan/almond paste  
Nangai nut

natural nut extract (e.g., almond, walnut)  
nut butters (e.g., cashew butter)  
nut meal  
nut meat  
nut paste (e.g., almond paste)  
nut pieces  
pecan

pili nut  
pine nut (also referred to as Indian, pignoli, piñolia, pignon, piñon, and pinyon nut)  
pistachio  
praline  
shea nut  
walnut

### Tree nuts are sometimes found in the following:

black walnut hull extract (flavoring)

natural nut extract  
nut distillates/alcoholic extracts  
nut oils (e.g., walnut oil, almond oil)

pesto  
walnut hull extract (flavoring)

Mortadella (may contain pistachios)

### Keep the following in mind:

Coconut is not a tree nut, and it was removed from the FDA labeling guidance regarding tree nuts in January 2025. That means it will not be treated as a major food allergen, and it will not be listed in a "Contains: tree nuts (coconut)" statement on food labels. But coconut can be a food allergen and should be listed individually in the ingredient list when used in a food.

## For a Crustacean Shellfish-Free Diet

### Avoid foods that contain shellfish or any of these ingredients:

barnacle crab	crawfish (crawdada, crayfish, ecrevisse) krill	lobster (langouste, langoustine, Moreton bay bugs, scampi, tomalley)	prawns shrimp (crevette, scampi)
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### Your doctor may advise you to avoid mollusks or these ingredients:

abalone clams (cherrystone, geoduck, littleneck, pismo, quahog) cockle	cuttlefish limpet (lapas, opihi) mussels octopus	oysters periwinkle scallops sea cucumber	sea urchin snails (escargot) squid (calamari) whelk (Turban shell)
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### Shellfish are sometimes found in the following:

bouillabaisse cuttlefish ink	glucosamine fish stock	seafood flavoring (e.g., crab or clam extract)	surimi
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### Keep the following in mind:

- Avoid seafood restaurants. Shellfish may come in contact with other foods during storage and preparation.
- Stay away from areas where shellfish is being cooked. Shellfish protein can get in the steam released during cooking.
- The FDA does not consider mollusk shellfish—such as oysters, clams, and scallops—to be major food allergens, which means major food allergen labeling laws do not apply.

## For a Milk-Free Diet

### Avoid foods that contain milk or any of these ingredients:

butter, butter fat, butter oil, butter acid butter ester(s) buttermilk casein casein hydrolysate caseinates (in all forms) cheese cottage cheese cream	curds custard diacetyl ghee half-and-half lactalbumin, lactalbumin phosphate lactoferrin lactose lactulose	milk (in all forms, including condensed, derivative, dry, evaporated, goat's milk and milk from other animals, lowfat, malted, milkfat, nonfat, powder, protein, skimmed, solids, whole) milk protein hydrolysate pudding	Recaldent® rennet casein sour cream, sour cream solids sour milk solids tagatose whey (in all forms) whey protein hydrolysate yogurt
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### Milk is sometimes found in the following:

artificial butter flavor baked goods caramel candies	chocolate (including dark chocolate) lactic acid starter culture and other bacterial cultures	luncheon meat, hot dogs, sausages margarine	nisin nondairy products nougat
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### Keep the following in mind:

- Individuals who are allergic to cow's milk are often advised to avoid milk from other animals because the proteins are similar. The FDA considers milk from domesticated cows, goats, sheep, and other ruminants to be "milk" for the purpose of food allergen labeling.
- Some commercially available forms of whey and casein are not animal-produced, and therefore may be promoted as "vegan-friendly," but they still contain milk protein and act as food allergens.
- Milk can be used in personal care items, and is sometimes used as an inactive ingredient in medications and medicated products (such as toothpaste).

## For a Fish-Free Diet

### Fish is sometimes found in the following:

barbecue sauce	fish gelatin (kosher gelatin, marine gelatin)	fishmeal	seafood flavoring
bouillabaisse	fish oil	nuoc mam (Vietnamese name for fish sauce; be aware of culturally-specific names)	shark cartilage
Caesar salad	fish sauce imitation fish or shellfish	pizza (anchovy topping)	shark fin
caviar	isinglass lutefisk maw, maws	roe	surimi
fish flavoring	fish stock	salad dressing	sushi, sashimi
fish flour			Worcestershire sauce
fish fume			

### Keep the following in mind:

- Avoid seafood restaurants. Fish may come in contact with other foods during storage and preparation, including fish protein released into fryer oil during the deep fry process.
- Stay away from areas where fish is being cooked. Fish protein can get in the steam released during cooking.

## For a Peanut-Free Diet

### Avoid foods that contain peanuts or any of these ingredients:

artificial nuts	goobers	monkey nuts	peanut butter
beer nuts	ground nuts	nut pieces	peanut flour
cold pressed, expeller pressed, or extruded peanut oil	mixed nuts	nut meat	peanut protein hydrolysate

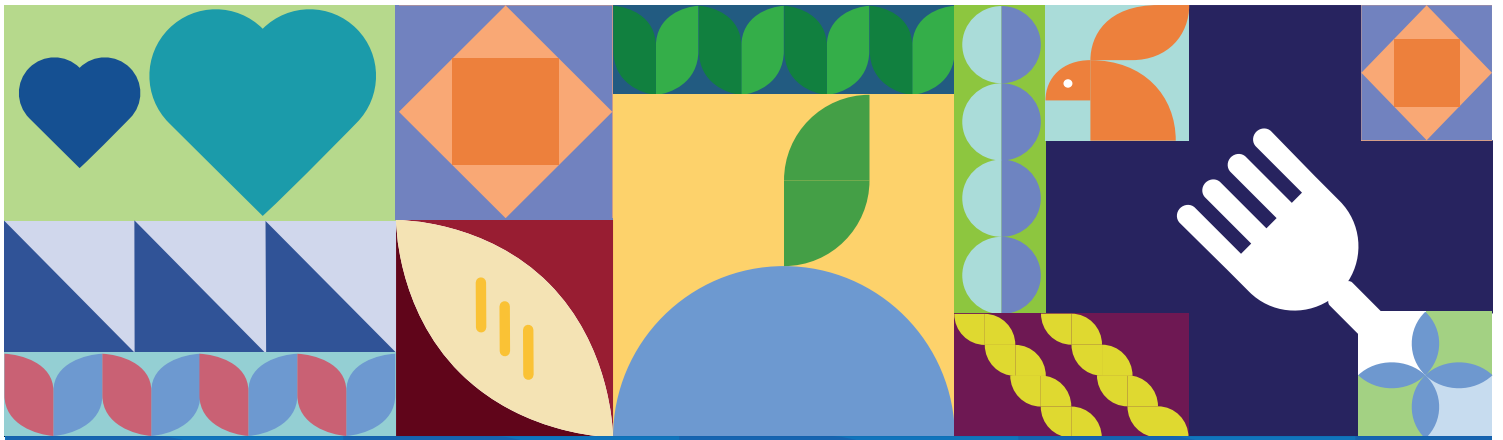
### Peanut is sometimes found in the following:

candy (including chocolate candy)	egg rolls	marzipan	nougat
chili	enchilada sauce	mole sauce	

### Keep the following in mind:

- The FDA exempts highly refined peanut oil, also known as arachis oil, from being labeled as a food allergen. Studies show that most allergic individuals can safely eat peanut oil that has been highly refined (not cold pressed, expeller pressed, or extruded peanut oil). Follow your doctor's advice.
- Some people with peanut allergy may also react to lupine (also called lupin), and/or pea protein. Be sure to discuss the risk with an allergist.
- Sunflower seeds, tree nuts and alternative nut butters are sometimes produced on equipment shared with peanuts. Contact the manufacturer

For more information, visit: [foodallergy.org/foodlabels](https://foodallergy.org/foodlabels)



# Additional Food Allergy Resources and Programs

**+ Research and Treatment Options**

[foodallergy.org/research-and-innovation](http://foodallergy.org/research-and-innovation)

**+ Epinephrine Options and Coupons**

[foodallergy.org/epinephrine](http://foodallergy.org/epinephrine)

**+ FARE-Recognized Support Groups**

[foodallergy.org/find-support-group](http://foodallergy.org/find-support-group)

**+ Food Allergy in School**

[foodallergy.org/fams](http://foodallergy.org/fams)

**+ Food Allergy in College**

[foodallergy.org/preparing-college](http://foodallergy.org/preparing-college)

**+ Food Allergy in the Workplace**

[foodallergy.org/workplaces](http://foodallergy.org/workplaces)

**+ Recipes**

[foodallergy.org/recipes](http://foodallergy.org/recipes)

**+ Teal Pumpkin Project**

[tealpumpkinproject.org](http://tealpumpkinproject.org)

**+ Be a PAL**

[foodallergy.org/resources/be-palr](http://foodallergy.org/resources/be-palr)

**+ Food Allergy Academy**

[foodallergyacademy.org](http://foodallergyacademy.org)

**+ Food Allergy Awareness Week/Month**

[foodallergy.org/faaw](http://foodallergy.org/faaw)

**+ Teen Advisory Group**

[foodallergy.org/teen-advisory-group](http://foodallergy.org/teen-advisory-group)

**+ FARE Patient Registry**

[foodallergy.org/fare-patient-registry](http://foodallergy.org/fare-patient-registry)

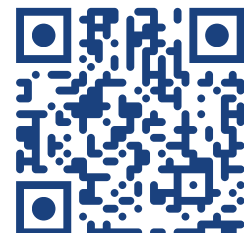
**+ FARECheck**

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