

# FOOD ALLERGY & INTOLERANCE

## DEFINITIONS

### Food Allergy:

Immune system response to a food that the body mistakenly thinks is harmful. Upon deciding a particular food is harmful, the immune system creates a defense immune system response (antibodies) to fight it. Food allergy symptoms develop when the antibodies are “battling” the “invading” food.

### Food Intolerance:

Food intolerances are a digestive system response and are much more common than food allergies.

### Food Allergy vs. Food Intolerance:

Food allergy and food intolerance are not the same thing. A food intolerance is a reaction that generally does not involve the immune system but is caused by the lack of an enzyme in the gastrointestinal tract.

## EIGHT MAJOR FOOD ALLERGENS



MILK



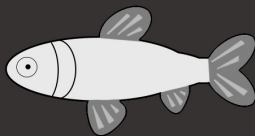
EGGS



PEANUTS



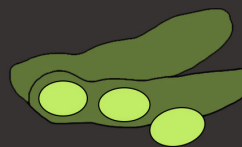
TREENUTS



FISH



SHELLFISH



SOYBEANS



WHEAT

# FOOD ALLERGY & INTOLERANCE FACTS

## Food Allergy:

- Each year 30,000 people visit emergency rooms as a result of food-induced reactions; even to trace amounts.
- An estimated 150-200 deaths, per year, are caused by food allergies; some occur within minutes of consumption.
- Peanuts are the leading cause of severe allergic reactions, followed by shellfish, fish, tree nuts, and eggs. Most individuals who have had a reaction ate a food that they thought was safe.

## Food Intolerance:

Food intolerance may occur when something in a food irritates a person's digestive system or when a person is unable to properly digest a food.

# SYMPTOMS

## ALLERGIC REACTIONS

### SKIN:

hives, eczema, swelling of the lips and face, itching

### RESPIRATORY TRACT:

swelling of the throat or mouth; difficulty breathing/shortness of breath; stuffy nose; itchy watery eyes; runny nose; wheezing and re-petitive coughing

### GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT:

abdominal cramps, vomiting, & diarrhea  
*\*Individuals may have different reactions\**

### ANAPHYLAXIS:

a life-threatening reaction that can include all of the above symptoms of an allergic reaction, plus:

### CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM:

drop in blood pressure, loss of consciousness, death

## FOOD INTOLERANCES

### GENERAL:

Nausea, stomach pain, gas, cramps or bloating, vomiting, heartburn, diarrhea, headaches, irritability, or nervousness.

### LACTOSE:

(found in milk and dairy products) is the most common food intolerance, which affects about 10% of Americans whose bodies don't have enough of the enzyme lactase to break down the milk sugar lactose. Bacteria in the digestive tract use the undigested lactose, producing gas, which results in bloating, abdominal pain, and often diarrhea.

### GLUTEN INTOLERANCE:

or Celiac Sprue, is caused by the body's inability to break down gluten. If not treated by modified diets, this specific intolerance can cause severe intestinal damage and loss of ability to absorb nutrients. Individuals with gluten intolerance must avoid the following products – wheat, barley, rye, and oats.

### OTHER COMMON FOOD INTOLERANCES:

include various dyes, sulfites in foods or beverages, such as red wine, and salicylates - a group of naturally occurring plant chemicals.

# KITCHEN PRODUCTION PROCEDURES

To begin food production, use the “Start Fresh” approach:



**START FRESH:** Wash hands thoroughly; making certain to wash between fingers, under & around fingernails, & wrists

**START FRESH:** Put on a new pair of ‘single-task’ gloves or simply just use tongs – **separate tongs** - as a barrier

**START FRESH:** Wash (with soap and clean water), rinse, and sanitize (with fresh Quat) **all** surfaces that may come in contact with food – equipment, tables, chairs, or utensils

- Use **separate fryers and separate cooking oils** when frying food



**START FRESH:** Cross-contact: shared pans, fryers, grills, counters, dishes, slicers, trays, blenders, processors, chopping boards, utensils and spills or splattering while cooking

## Special Orders

- Use new utensils for “special orders” (knives, tongs, spoons, spatulas, scoops)
- “Special orders” need to be easily and quickly distinguished from regular menu items (Separate, designated “Allergy Zone” and Different colored plate)

**Shared utensils** or accidental mixing at salad bars or steamtables



**START FRESH:** Prep food for students, or customers, with food allergies in a **separate area** from other food

- If a food does not have a label or if you are unsure about the ingredients, **DO NOT GUESS.**
  - Review the Recipe in Food Allergen Recipe Notebook
  - Review the Processed Foods Component List

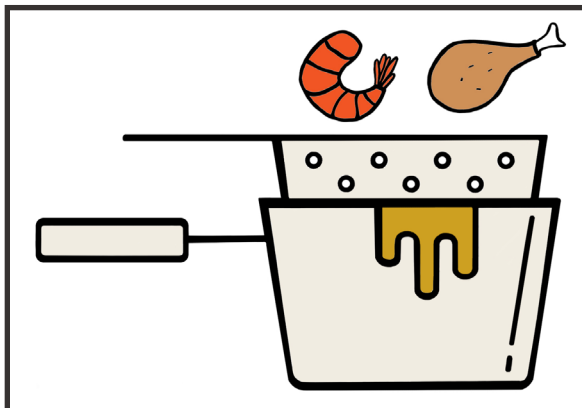
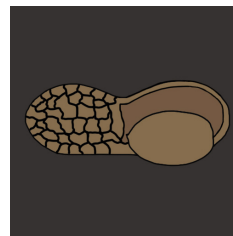
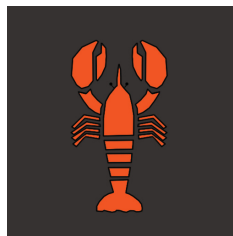
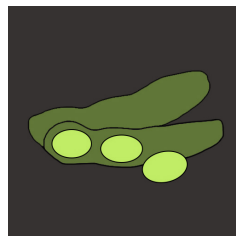
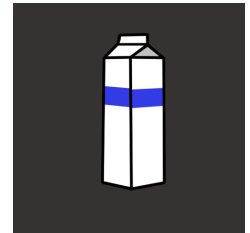
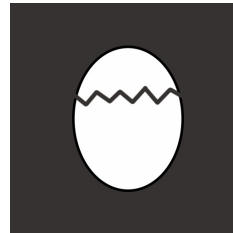
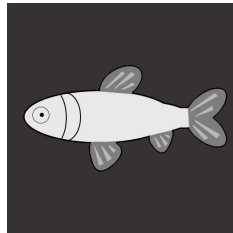
**\*\*For some people, just a trace amount of the offending food can cause an allergic reaction\*\***

# CROSS-CONTACT

## TAKE CARE & BE AWARE

Do not use the same fryer to cook different types of food that contain allergens:

**WHEAT**  
**FISH**  
**EGGS**  
**DAIRY**  
**SOY**  
**SHELLFISH**  
**PEANUTS**  
**TREE NUTS**



In the image, shrimp allergens could be transferred to the chicken being fried in the same oil.

**If a mistake is made in preparation, make a new batch. Avoid Cross-Contact by thoroughly cleaning.**

## TAKE CARE & BE AWARE

Prevent placing food on surfaces that have touched allergens (cutting boards, bowls, containers, hotel pans, knives, pots & pans, slicers, mixers, all utensils, gloves)

Putting food on surfaces that have touched allergens can cause cross-contact. Salmon on the same counter used for peanut butter bars can transfer some of the peanut allergen.



# SERVING LINE STAFF

## Serving line staff should be able to:

- Know which person in the kitchen ‘to ask’ about how an entrée was prepared, or “ask a manager”
- Identify ingredients - know who to ask and/or where to get ingredient information
  - Have one person, available per meal shift, to answer students’ questions about menu and entrée items. Answer questions honestly and accurately.
  - When a student mentions they have a food allergy, it should be taken seriously
    - Hand deliver plate to student with allergy, to prevent cross-contact
    - It’s okay to say “I don’t know, let me ask a manager.”

Do not guess about ingredients – if you don’t know, say so, then “ask a manager.”

## HIGH-RISK MENU CHOICES

**FRIED FOODS:** cooking oil is often used for many different kinds of foods; designate a fryer for specific foods or have “information posted.”

**DESSERTS:** ingredients such as nuts are in recipes, or an incorrect placard is posted. Supervisors of each shift should verify correct placard is posted with dessert item.

**SAUCES:** can be used in entrees and can include “hidden” ingredients; include information from “Processed Foods Component List” when creating a ‘Contains’ card.

**ENTREES:** staff and customer “visual observation” of food items, a precaution that is important for anyone with a food allergy.

An entrée with a pastry covering may be difficult to see.

**COMBINATION FOODS:** food items that contain many ingredients that may be difficult to see, such as stews, pot pies, or casseroles with cheese layered on top.

**BUFFET TABLES:** considered high-risk due to likelihood of cross-contact.

Serving utensils may be used for several items, or bits of food from one food container accidentally falls into another food container.

Remember to ‘Take Care and Be Aware’ on placard and label placement.