



Label Reading Tips to Avoid Food Allergens

Food labeling laws in the US require food labels to clearly identify the source of ingredients derived from the following eight major food allergens in plain language:

- Milk
- Soy
- Wheat
- Egg
- Peanut
- Tree nut (the specific nut must be identified)
- Fish (the specific fish species must be identified)
- Shellfish (the specific species must be identified)

Before you buy any food product, be sure to read the entire food label to make sure the product is safe. Manufacturers may change ingredients and food preparation methods at any time.

Ingredients:

- Take care to read the entire ingredient list including any advisory statements such as “contains” or “may contain.”
- Food products that contain milk as an ingredient are required to list the word “milk” on the product label. This is true for all foods listed above.
- People allergic to foods not included in the top 8 allergens may need to call the manufacturer to know if ingredients labeled with non-specific terms such as “spice” or “natural flavoring” contain a food that should be avoided.

Advisory Statements: Allergens may be present in foods with precautionary food allergen statements, so it is best to avoid packaged foods that have these warnings. Certain manufacturing practices, such as the use of shared storage containers and processing equipment can result in residue of allergenic foods accidentally getting into otherwise safe food products.

Precautionary labeling is voluntary and includes statements such as:

- “May contain....”
- “Might contain....”
- “Processed on lines with....”
- “Manufactured on equipment that also manufactures....”
- “Manufactured in a facility that processes....”

Sample Food Label:



Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 can	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 140	
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0g	0%
Sodium 20mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 36g	12%
Sugars 36g	
Protein 0g	
<small>* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.</small>	

Ingredients: WATER, CHICKEN, RICE, MODIFIED CORN STARCH, CREAM (MILK), POTATO, CARROT, ONION, SPICES, SALT

MAY CONTAIN EGG AND WHEAT

Disclaimer: This document contains information and/or instructional materials developed by the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for the typical patient with your condition. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about this document, your condition or your treatment plan.

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