Food Allergy Action Month:
All About Allergies
A food allergy is a reaction, also known as anaphylaxis that occurs when your immune system overreacts to a normally harmless food protein. The immune system “attacks” this food protein, which causes symptoms that range from mild to severe.

Did you know that while allergies develop more commonly in children, they can also affect adults?

FACT:
Every 3 minutes, a food allergy reaction sends someone to the emergency room in the United States!
What are the Symptoms?

**SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF ANAPHYLAXIS**

Anaphylaxis (an-a-fi-LAK-sis) is a serious allergic reaction that comes on quickly and has the potential to become life-threatening. The most common anaphylactic reactions are to foods, venom, medications, and latex.

Anaphylaxis signs and symptoms that may occur alone (*) or in any combination after exposure to an allergen include:

**MOUTH:** itching, tingling, swelling of the lips/tongue/palate (roof of the mouth)

**THROAT:** hoarseness, tightening of throat, difficulty swallowing, hacking cough, stridor (a loud, high-pitched sound when breathing in)

**LUNGS:** shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing, chest pain, tightness

**SKIN:** hives or other rash, redness/flushing, itching, swelling

**EYES/NOSE:** runny nose, stuffy nose, sneezing, watery red eyes, itchy eyes, swollen eyes

**CIRCULATION/HEART:** chest pain, low blood pressure, weak pulse, shock, pale blue color, dizziness or fainting, lethargy (lack of energy)

**GUT:** abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

*IMMEDIATE & POTENTIAL LIFE-THREATENING SYMPTOMS*

Consult with a board-certified allergist for an accurate diagnosis and management plan.

* Although the majority of individuals experiencing anaphylaxis have skin symptoms, some of the most severe cases have no rash, hives, swelling

**EPINEPHRINE** is the first-line of treatment for anaphylaxis

* Antihistamines, inhalers, & other treatments should only be used as secondary treatment

**ALWAYS CARRY TWO (2) epinephrine auto-injectors at all times**

* When you, or someone you know, begin to experience symptoms, CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY!
<table>
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<th>MOST COMMON FOOD ALLERGIES</th>
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| **COW'S MILK & MILK CONTAINING PRODUCTS**  
Such as: milk powder, butter, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, etc. |
| **EGGS** |
| **PEANUTS** |
| **TREE NUTS**  
Such as: almonds, cashews, pistachios, walnuts, etc. |
| **SHELLFISH**  
Such as: shrimp, lobster, squid, scallops, etc. |
| **FISH** |
| **WHEAT** |
| **SOY PRODUCTS**  
Such as: soy sauce, soy milk, tofu, soy nuts, etc. |

FACT: Any food can cause an allergic reaction!
How to Avoid an Allergic Reaction

- Avoid your allergens.
- Learn how to read food labels.
- Ask about ingredients in food.
- Prepare foods with clean utensils on clean surfaces.
- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after touching foods.
- Educate family, friends, and others about your allergies.
- Focus on safe foods that can be consumed.

**FACT:**
There is currently no cure for food allergies. The only safe method to avoid an allergic reaction is to **avoid known allergens**. Any contact with even small amounts of the allergen can cause a serious reaction!
Reading Food Labels

Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCP) is a United States law that requires all food labels to list ingredients containing one or more of the top 8 allergens.

Ingredients: Water, sugar, corn syrup, lecithin (soy), citric acid, whey (milk), eggs, natural flavors.

CONTAINS SOY AND MILK

Nutrition Facts

Ingredients: Water, sugar, corn syrup, lecithin, citric acid, whey, eggs, natural flavors.

CONTAINS SOY AND MILK

Allergens can be listed using their common name in parentheses following the ingredient.

Allergens can be listed after ingredients following the word “CONTAINS”

Always read food labels carefully before purchasing or consuming any food item! You can always call a food company to ask questions regarding potential allergens.


