

# FOOD ALLERGY FACT SHEET

## Managing Food Allergies: Child Nutrition Staff

### 1. Know your district or school food allergy policy.

- Read your district or school food allergy policy.
- Understand your role in keeping students with food allergies safe.
- Know how to activate the school's emergency action plan if a student has an allergic reaction.

### 2. Be familiar with each student's medical statement and Food Allergy Action Plan.

- Follow the instructions in the student's medical statement.
- Understand each student's Food Allergy Action Plan/Emergency Care Plan and keep in a place that is easy to find.
- Seek clarification from the parent/guardian if the medical statement is not clear.
- Know your school's system to identify students who have food allergies.
- Keep all student information confidential.

### 3. Read ingredient labels to check for allergens (foods that can cause allergic reactions).

- Most ingredient labels list the top eight foods causing allergic reactions using their common name (milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, soy, fish, and crustacean shellfish).
- Check labels for warning statements such as "may contain," "produced on shared equipment," or "produced in a plant that uses." These foods should not be served to students with allergies.
- Check labels for allergens on every product each time the product is purchased. Contact the manufacturer if the label is unclear.
- Maintain labels for a minimum of 24 hours after the food is served.

### 4. Avoid cross-contact when preparing and serving food.

- Wash hands with soap and water before and after each task. Using water alone or hand sanitizer alone does not remove allergens.
- Wash, rinse, and sanitize all cookware before and after each use when preparing allergen-free foods.
- Clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces.
- Designate an allergy-free zone in the kitchen. When working with multiple food allergies, set up procedures to prevent cross-contact.
- Follow standardized recipes exactly as written.
- Use serving utensils and gloves designated for allergen-free foods.
- Clean and sanitize tables and chairs before and after each meal and as needed.



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## For More Information

American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology  
[www.aaaai.org](http://www.aaaai.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network  
[www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)

Food Allergy Initiative  
[www.faiusa.org](http://www.faiusa.org)

Food and Nutrition Information Center  
[www.nal.usda.gov](http://www.nal.usda.gov)

Food Insight (Web site sponsored by International Food Information Council Foundation)  
[www.foodinsight.org](http://www.foodinsight.org)

National Food Service Management Institute  
[www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org)

National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases  
[www.niaid.nih.gov](http://www.niaid.nih.gov)

National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education  
[www.nrckids.org](http://www.nrckids.org)

School Nutrition Association  
[www.schoolnutrition.org](http://www.schoolnutrition.org)

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

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