Maryland
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Food Allergies

What you need to know

Millions of people have food allergies that can range from mild to life-threatening. The nine most common food allergens are:

Wheat

Milk

Sesame

Fish

Peanuts

Soy

Crustacean Shellfish

Eggs

Tree Nuts

Always let the guest make their own informed decision.

When a guest informs you that someone has a food allergy, follow the four R's below:

- Refer the food allergy concern to the department manager or person in charge.
- Review the food allergy with the customer and check ingredient labels.
- Remember to check the preparation procedure for potential cross-contact.
- Respond to the customer and inform them of your findings.

Prevent sources of cross contact:

- Cooking oils, splatter, and steam from cooking foods.
- Allergen-containing foods touching or coming in to contact with allergy-free foods (e.g., a nut-containing muffin touching a nut-free muffin).

Any food equipment used in the processing of allergy-free foods must be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized prior to use, including:

- All utensils (i.e., spoons, knives, spatulas, tongs), cutting boards, bowls, pots, food pans, sheet pans, and preparation surfaces.
- Fryers and grills.
- Wash hands and change gloves after handling potential food allergens.

If a guest has an allergic reaction, call 911 and notify management.

Visit https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/OEHFP/OFPCHS/Pages/Food-Allergies.aspx for more information, including the Emergency Epinephrine Certificate Program for food service facilities.

FARE
Food Allergy Research & Education