



For more information about food allergies, contact Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia on 1300 728 000 or visit allergyfacts.org.au

Making careful food choices

- Consider ordering simply prepared dishes such as grilled meats with steamed vegetables and a baked potato. Consider avoiding sauces as they may contain allergens.
- Consider ordering fresh fruit for dessert.
- Even if you have previously eaten the same meal at the same restaurant you need to declare your allergy when ordering on every occasion.
- Do not assume a dish in one restaurant is the same in another.
- Do not be tempted to taste someone else's food.

Download our Chef Card

TO THE CHEF:

I have severe food allergy. To avoid a life-threatening allergic reaction, I must avoid all foods that contain / might contain:





Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia

Your trusted charity for allergy support

The information contained in this brochure is not medical advice. Those concerned about food allergy should always consult a doctor.

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ABN: 70 693 242 620

Eating out with food allergies



Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia

Your trusted charity for allergy support



With careful planning, you can enjoy eating out with friends and family

There are many strategies you can put in place to help reduce the risk of an allergic reaction. Plan ahead and educate those around you. Dishes may have hidden ingredients and there is a risk of cross-contamination during the preparation. You need to be careful and ask questions.

The most important rule to remember:

If you do not have your adrenaline (epinephrine) injector (e.g. EpiPen®) with you, **DO NOT EAT!** Research studies show prompt administration of adrenaline saves lives.

Important information: **Do NOT stand up or walk** if you think you are having a severe allergic reaction. Lay flat on the ground. If breathing is difficult, sit up on the ground with legs outstretched, but do not stand. Remember to take out your [ASCIA Action Plan](#) and follow the instructions carefully. If in doubt administer your adrenaline injector and call 000 (triple zero) for an ambulance.

Being prepared

If at any time during your meal you think you may be having a reaction, stop eating. Tell those around you and follow instructions on your ASCIA Action Plan.

If adrenaline is administered, call 000 (triple zero) for an ambulance.

Finding a restaurant or food outlet

- Make enquiries beforehand. Speak to the manager or chef prior to arrival, if possible.
- Try to go to a restaurant at a less busy time, especially if you have not already made enquiries.
- Check the menu on the restaurant website and when you arrive.
- Disclose your food allergy and check with the staff/chef to see if they can provide you with a meal that does not contain the food you are allergic to.
- Do not share straws, cups, cutlery or other food utensils.



Enjoy eating out with careful planning

Avoiding high risk places and dishes

- If fish or shellfish allergic, avoid seafood restaurants. Keep cross contamination in mind at other restaurants.
- If peanut or tree nut allergic, it is best to avoid Asian style dishes and restaurants.
- If sesame allergic, avoid Middle Eastern style dishes, patisseries and salad garnishes.
- Be aware that fried foods may share cooking oil with shellfish, fish, egg and other allergens.
- If egg or milk allergic, avoid crumbed or battered foods (e.g. schnitzels, tempura) and creamy sauces that contain these ingredients.
- Some pasta dishes, meatballs and hamburgers may contain egg or nuts, and often contain wheat.
- Vegetarian style food often contains nut ingredients including vegetarian cheese which may be made from nuts.
- Remember pastries and desserts may contain tree nuts or peanuts.
- Avoid buffet style restaurants where serving utensils can be shared and foods may be accidentally mixed.
- Check salad garnishes and dressings.
- Choose dishes with fewer ingredients as there is less room for error.

Placing your order

- Read the menu carefully.
- Always disclose your food allergy before ordering.
- Use an [A&AA Chef Card](#) (translated versions available). This card outlines the allergen/s you must avoid. Ask that the card go to the chef and be returned with your meal. Having the card come back with your meal will make it more likely that the right meal goes to the right person.
- Do not ask for a guarantee. You can minimise the risk but it can never be removed.
- Ask the staff which dishes are free of the food you are allergic to. If the staff are unsure ask them to speak with the chef.
- Be prepared to wait while they check an ingredients folder or label. They may need to speak with someone more informed on food allergy.
- You may be served first or last, be patient.

Watch out for 'hidden' ingredients

For example:

- pesto may contain tree nuts or peanuts
- satay sauce contains peanuts
- Worcestershire sauce contains anchovies
- tahini is made from sesame seeds
- hummus contains chickpeas and tahini (made from sesame seeds)
- sweet pastry bases may contain ground peanuts or tree nuts
- marzipan contains ground almonds and may contain egg
- praline contains nuts and nougat contains nuts and eggs
- breads, cakes and pastries that are shiny have probably been glazed with milk or egg
- breads and ice cream may contain egg

The 'touch' test

After doing all their checks, teens and adults can consider doing a touch test. Put a small amount of food on the inside of your lower lip and see if any oral symptoms develop e.g. tingling, burning, swelling. If you have symptoms, **DO NOT EAT.**