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# Top Entertaining Tips when a guest has a food allergy

With 1 in 10 infants\* now developing a food allergy, being conscious of what you are buying and how you prepare food is more important than ever.

Take note of these 5 Tips for Food Safety, presented by Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia ([www.allergyfacts.org.au](http://www.allergyfacts.org.au)), and make sure you're not the odd one out when it comes to food safety!

1. **Know the 9:** It isn't widely known, but when it comes to food allergies, 90% of reactions are caused by only 9 foods. So take the time to know what foods are the ones most likely to cause a reaction, and try to avoid them where possible, or let your guests know if any of these foods are present in a dish. The 9 foods to be aware of are milk, egg, peanut, tree nuts (e.g. cashew, almond, walnut), fish, shellfish (e.g. prawn, crab, lobster) soy, wheat and sesame.
2. **Less is more:** Keep recipes simple. Don't add extra sauces, dips or marinades where possible, and make sure you know exactly what makes up each dish. If you plan to BBQ, remember that ready marinated meats may contain allergens.
3. **Fresh is best:** By buying fresh ingredients, you know exactly what it is you are getting. Processed foods often contain many ingredients sourced from several suppliers. Although all packaged foods must be labelled there is less room for accidents if using fresh ingredients. Simple to prepare, fresh foods are often safest for those with food allergy.
4. **Read the label:** This one is as simple as it sounds, and although it may be a little time consuming, it is worth the investment. Read the label so that you know what you are getting. Look for food labels each and every time you purchase a packaged food. If there is no label, ask the person serving the food about allergen content and safety during preparation. This way, you can have the most confidence about the contents of what you buy. By remembering to always read or ask about food content every time, you can avoid any unpleasant surprises. For instance, did you know that ham from the deli is often glazed with egg?
5. **The guest knows best:** Check with your guests to see if they are allergic to anything. They'll be happy you asked, and if you do have a guest with food allergy, find out what products they trust and then keep all labels so they can read them too.

By sticking to these 5 simple tips, you can help make sure that your party is remembered for all the right reasons!

\*Osborne et al. Prevalence of challenge-proven IgE-mediated food allergy using population-based sampling and predetermined challenge criteria in infants. *J Allergy Clin Immunol* 2011; 127: 668-676

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