

# FOOD ALLERGIES INTOLERANCES

Allergies and food intolerance are a concern for many parents as new foods are introduced into a child's diet.

## THE BIG 8!

Eight foods are the source of 90% of food allergies in the United States and must be identified on labels of processed foods.

These foods are:

- MILK
- EGG
- FISH
- SHELLFISH
- TREE NUT
- PEANUT
- WHEAT
- SOYBEAN

## Is it an allergy or an intolerance?

Food intolerances are often confused as food allergies. Symptoms of food intolerance are generally temporary in nature - diarrhea, hives, itchy skin, throat or tongue—it's a digestive response rather than an immune system response.

When it comes to an allergy, the body sees the food as a hostile agent and there is an immune response.

This produces a variety of symptoms that usually occur right after consuming that specific food.

Severe allergic reactions are unlikely, but very serious. The potentially deadly reaction is called **anaphylaxis**.

**Anaphylaxis symptoms include any of the following alone or in combination:**

- Skin rash around mouth, nose and eyes
- Swelling of eyes, lips, tongue, pharynx and/or face
- Itching in mouth, pharynx, eyes and/or skin
- Congested or stuffy nose, watery eyes
- Nausea, vomiting an/or diarrhea

**A quick  
response can  
save your  
child's life.**

**If you suspect your child is having an anaphylactic reaction, seek urgent medical attention.**

# COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT FOOD ALLERGIES

**Myth:**  
Food allergies  
are not real.

**Fact:** Food allergies are real and involve the body's immune system. In food allergy, the immune system misinterprets a food as a harmful invader and releases histamine and other chemicals to protect the body from harm. Symptoms can include hives, vomiting, diarrhea, and respiratory distress.

**Myth:**  
Food allergies  
are not life  
threatening.

**Fact:** Food allergy affects up to 10% of young children and 2-3% of adults. Food allergy is the most common cause of anaphylaxis, which can be fatal.

**Myth:**  
Food additives and  
artificial flavors cause  
the majority of food  
allergic reactions.

**Fact:** Contrary to common belief, natural foods account for the majority of allergic reactions. The foods that cause 90 percent of allergic reactions are: peanuts, milk, eggs, wheat, soy, tree nuts (i.e. almonds, walnuts, pecans), fish and crustacean shellfish.

**Myth:**  
Each allergic  
reaction to  
food becomes  
increasingly worse.

**Fact:** The severity of a reaction is based on a number of factors, including the amount of food ingested. A food-allergic individual may experience a mild or severe reaction.

## How do food allergies develop?

Most food allergies start in childhood and scientific evidence shows that some allergies and intolerances disappear as children grow and develop. This is more common with allergies to wheat, milk and egg. Allergies to seafood, fish and peanuts usually last for a lifetime.

## Are food allergies preventable?

Research shows that introducing food with allergenic components as early as 6 months can actually reduce the risk of developing an allergy to that food. Small amounts and frequent ingestion of an allergen food like wheat or peanuts (for example) gives the body a chance to accept the nutrient.

## Treatment options

There is no cure for food allergies and generally avoiding the food is the best treatment. Therefore, for the convenience of the parent—and for the safety of the child, in my recipes I make a note when a recipe contains any of the eight most common allergens. I also note when recipes do not contain any of the eight common allergens.

Those recipes say: **Contains: None of the Common Allergens.** If your child does not have a known allergy, there is no reason to avoid these foods.

## FINAL ADVICE

It can be a challenge to provide children with food allergies a wide variety of foods. However, it's still important to offer as many food groups and colors as possible and to mix in different textures to ensure a well-balanced diet. If you are struggling to find recipes that avoid a food allergy for someone in your family, please write me.

**Our team will get to work on ways to help you.**

