



RURAL CITY OF WANGARATTA

Food providers can greatly reduce the risks associated with food allergies. Small changes such as being aware of the common allergens in food and drink make a big difference.

What is a Food Allergy?

A food allergy is when the body's immune system mistakenly reacts to a component of certain food or ingredient (normally a type of protein) as if it were harmful. The food that causes the reaction is called an allergen. It is important to be familiar with foods and ingredients that may cause an allergic reaction and adopt good food handling practices to reduce the risk of accidental exposure and adverse effects.

What are the symptoms of a food allergy reaction?

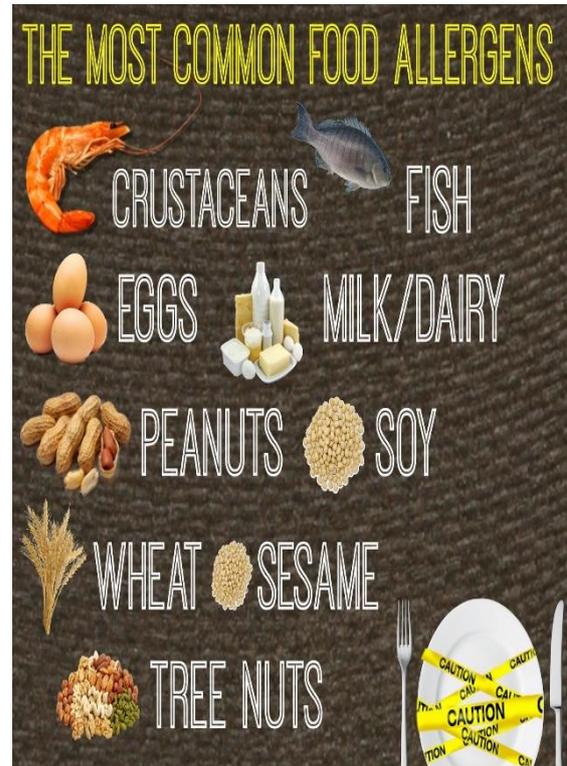
Symptoms can happen within a few minutes or up to a few hours of the allergen being eaten and can be seen or felt in different parts of the body.

Mild to moderate allergic reaction

- Skin redness, hives or welts
- Tingling mouth
- Swelling of the face, lips and eyes
- Abdominal pain, vomiting



Food Allergy Fact Sheet for Food Providers



Severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis)

- Difficult/noisy breathing
- Wheeze or persistent cough
- Swelling or tightness of the throat
- Swelling of the tongue
- Difficulty talking and/or hoarse throat
- Persistent dizziness or collapse
- Pale and floppy (in young children)
- Death

What is anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a serious reaction that happens quickly. Anaphylaxis can involve many different parts of the body. The most severe symptoms can restrict breathing and blood circulation and may cause death.



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Common cause of allergens

- **Crustacea, shellfish and their products**, e.g. prawns, crabs, lobster, Balmain bugs, yabbies.
- **Eggs and egg products**, e.g. whole egg, egg yolk, egg white, albumin, dried egg, meringue, custard powder.
- **Fish and fish products**, e.g. roe, caviar, anchovies, Worcestershire sauce.
- **Milk and milk products**, e.g. dried milk, skim milk, evaporated milk, condensed milk, whey, lactose, yoghurt.
- **Peanuts, and their products**, e.g. peanuts, peanut butter, peanut oil,
- **Soybeans and their products**, e.g. soybeans, soy milk, bean curd.
- **Tree nuts and their products**, e.g. almonds, brazil nuts, cashew nuts, chestnuts, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans.
- **Sesame seeds and their products** e.g. hummus.
- **Gluten containing cereal or their products**, e.g. wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt, triticale.

Allergies and catering

Management of food allergy is a shared responsibility and food providers can greatly reduce the risks associated with food allergies by:

- **Avoiding cross contamination** of food during the storage, preparation, cooking and serving of food through shared utensils or equipment, sharing food (buffet style/finger foods), re-using cooking oils and/or unclean work surfaces.
- Understanding the seriousness of food allergy and the needs of the individual with a food allergy.
- Reading the ingredient labels of packaged foods and identify food allergens.
- Providing the allergen status of foods on request.
- Noting and communicating the allergy risk of ingredients added to a dish or recipe that does not usually contain it.

For further information contact:

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