

Understanding Fresh Food Allergens



The number of shoppers who have food allergies is increasing. Humans can be allergic to any kind of food, but eight food groups are responsible for 90% of food allergies. You can remember these eight food groups by remembering

Food Problems Will Send The Emergency Medical Service*

The list below is not a full listing of potential allergens, but a list of more common ones:



Focus on Allergens

Fish

Includes all fish, fish oil, fish sauce, anchovies, some salad dressings, and surimi



Tree Nuts

Includes almonds, filberts/hazelnuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts, pine nuts, and other tree nuts

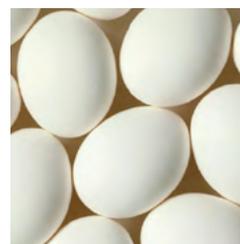


Peanuts



Eggs

Eggs, some egg substitutes and foods containing eggs like mayonnaise, meringue, and surimi



Wheat

Includes flour, bread crumbs, couscous, matzoh, pasta, and sprouted whole wheat



Milk

Includes all dairy products, such as milk, cheese, butter, cream, yogurt, and whey



Shellfish

Includes all crustaceans, such as lobster, crab, oysters and shrimp



Soy

Includes Lecithin, guar gum, soy flour, and soy milk



For more in-depth information on the top 8 food allergens, see FARE's *Tips for Avoiding Your Allergen* at foodallergy.org.

Know Where to Find Allergen Information

Customers may ask if your products contain ingredients to which they are allergic, or intolerant. Some customers will ask you for ingredient lists or product labels. Know where to find this information. It is the customer's responsibility to look at ingredient lists and decide if products may safely be consumed. Do NOT make a health recommendation—the customer's life may be at risk!

Allergy vs. Intolerance

A food allergy results when the immune system mistakenly targets a harmless food protein – an allergen – as a threat and attacks it. Reactions can range from relatively mild (watery eyes, hives) to life-threatening (airway constriction, anaphylaxis).

A food intolerance does not involve the immune system, but still may cause discomfort or compromise a person's health.

*Memory device courtesy of Clyde's Restaurant Group, Washington, DC.

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