



PEANUT ALLERGIES

The main problem with a peanut allergy is the severity of the reaction. In fact, studies by Scott H. Sicherer, M.D., associate professor of pediatrics at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine and a researcher in the Jaffe Food Allergy Institute, suggest that 80% of people with a peanut allergy have had a reaction that involves a breathing problem or have experienced a reaction that affected multiple areas of their body. He further estimates that 100 to 150 people in the USA die each year from peanut allergies.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms of peanut allergy can range from mild to life-threatening. If you have a mild reaction, you may get a stomachache, a runny nose, an itchy skin rash, hives, or tingling in your lips or tongue. If your reaction is worse, you may develop additional symptoms such as a tight throat, hoarse voice, wheezing, coughing, feeling sick to your stomach, vomiting, belly pain, and diarrhea. Your symptoms may start from within a few minutes to a few hours after eating peanuts or being exposed through the air.

People who are allergic to peanuts may have a life-threatening reaction called anaphylaxis. Symptoms of anaphylaxis can include difficulty breathing and swallowing, vomiting and diarrhea, dizziness, dangerously low blood pressure, swelling of the lips, tongue, throat, and other parts of the body, and loss of consciousness. If not treated, death can result. Anaphylaxis usually occurs within minutes but can occur up to several hours after eating peanuts or in severe cases transferred by the sense of smell.

Foods Commonly Containing Peanuts:

Aside from the obvious foods (peanut butter, etc.) peanuts are commonly found in chocolate candies, Asian sauces and dishes (especially Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese, and Malaysian), packaged goods (such as snack foods), and all sorts of baked goods. Some granolas and cereals are made with peanuts as well.

NOTE: Peanut allergies are **NOT** the same as tree nut allergies!

The following common nuts are considered tree nuts under U.S. law: almond; Brazil nut; cashew; chestnut; filbert/hazelnut; macadamia nut; pecan; pine nut (pignolia nut); pistachio; walnut.

Peanuts are part of the legume family. However, many see allergies to both and both can trigger severe anaphylactic reactions.

CHECK PRODUCT LABELS!!

PROCEDURES FOR PEANUT FREE FOR TEACHERS

1. Peanuts will be allowed in the cafeteria but we will designate an area as “peanut free”.
2. Peanuts are not allowed anywhere else.
3. Peanut containing items are not allowed in classrooms, hallways, offices or busses.
4. If staff chooses to eat something with peanuts, they must do so in the teachers’ lounge. Teachers are asked to wash their hands and rinse their mouth well prior to returning to the classroom.
5. Students will be asked to do the same if they have the smell of peanuts on them.
6. “No Peanuts” signed will be posted in all classrooms and other highly visible areas of the building.
7. We ask that no peanut containing foods be sold in school (candy cart, vending, and teacher’s lounge). We are currently reviewing fundraisers and concession.