

Proper Procedures for Allergies - Avoiding Cross-Contact

A food allergen is a protein in a food or ingredient to which some people are sensitive. These proteins occur naturally. When enough are eaten, an allergic reaction can occur. The immune system mistakenly considers the protein harmful. The immune system attacks the food protein.

- Initially, symptoms can be mild including nausea, wheezing, hives, swelling of the various parts of the body, vomiting and/or diarrhea, abdominal pain, and itchy throat.
- In severe cases, death can occur. Anaphylaxis - a severe allergic reaction that can lead to death. Call the emergency number when this occurs.

Proper Procedures for allergies:

- Food labels are important. “Big Eight” allergens must be clearly identified on labels of manufactured food by one of these methods:
 - Including it in the common name of the food.
 - Showing it in parentheses after the ingredient.
 - Showing it in a “contains” statement.

Service staff should help prevent allergic reactions by:

- Describing dishes and telling customer how items are prepared.
- Identifying ingredients, letting customer know if the food they are allergic to is in the item, and identifying secret ingredients.
- Suggesting items to customer that do not contain the food that the customer is allergic to.
- Clearly marking the order as an allergen to inform the kitchen staff of the allergy.
- Confirming the special order with the kitchen that it’s the allergen dish and no allergens have touched the plate.
- Hand delivering the allergen food separately from other food.

Avoiding Cross-Contact. Kitchen staff can avoid cross-contact by:

- Checking recipes and ingredient labels to confirm allergens are not present.
- Making sure the allergen does not touch anything for customers with food allergies. Including food, beverages, utensils, and equipment.
- Using separate fryers and cooking oils when frying food for customers with food allergies.
- Labeling food packaged on-site for retail sale. Naming all major allergens on the label and following any additional labeling requirements.

Big Eight Allergens- Milk, Eggs, Fish, Shellfish, Tree Nuts, Peanuts, Wheat and Soy.

Food Allergen Poster <https://michiganfoodsafety.com/images/MFSDocs/allergies/Food-Allergy-Tabloid-Poster-4-2012-FINAL.pdf>