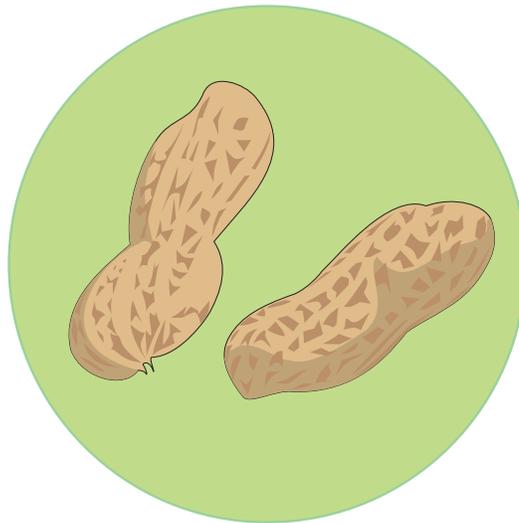


Peanut Allergies in Schools

School boards now have policies and procedures to meet the needs of children with allergies. When a student has a peanut or nut allergy, the school asks all parents not to send peanuts or nuts from home. It is very important that the whole school community, including teachers, parents and other children, understands the risks and help allergic children avoid a life-threatening reaction.



and walnuts. Tree nuts and peanuts are often processed in the same facilities, so there is a risk that tree nuts may have some peanut protein residue on them and vice-versa. This is why both peanuts and tree nuts must be avoided.

Did you know?

Peanuts are actually part of the legume family, like beans and lentils.

What is a peanut allergy?

A peanut allergy occurs when the immune system overreacts to peanut exposure. Peanuts are one of the most common food allergens, especially in children. If a child has a severe allergy, even the smallest trace of a peanut can cause a reaction called anaphylaxis (an-a-fi-lak-sis). This can lead to death if the child is not treated. Although some children may outgrow their peanut allergy, it usually lasts a lifetime.

What about nut allergy?

A tree nut allergy can also be severe and often lifelong. Tree nuts of concern are almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachio nuts



Can't the allergic child just avoid peanuts?

People with peanut allergies have to be very careful about what they eat. It only takes a tiny trace of peanut residue to cause some people to react. Sometimes the peanut ingredient transfers to another food that does not normally have that ingredient in it. For example, a knife with peanut butter residue on it could be used for another spread or foods with nuts can get mixed in with other foods in bulk food bins.

It is very important that everyone that comes in contact with an allergic child is aware of his/her allergy so that they can help the child avoid exposure to the allergen.

Tips on how to avoid peanuts and nuts in food sent to school

When grocery shopping:

- Read the labels on pre-packaged foods very carefully every time you shop. Companies may change their recipes or use different ingredients at any time.
- Watch out for other names for peanuts:
 - Arachide
 - Arachis oil
 - Beer nuts
 - Cacahouète/ cacahouette/ cacahuète
 - Goober nuts, goober peas
 - Ground nuts
 - Kernels
 - Mandelonas, Nu-Nuts™
 - Nut meats, Valencias

For a list of other possible sources of peanuts and nuts, please see Health Canada's web site:

www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/allerg/fa-aa/index_e.html

- You might see the line "may contain traces of peanuts or nuts..." at the end of the ingredient list. This means that the company is not 100 percent sure that the product is free of peanut ingredients. There is some risk if it is eaten by someone with a peanut allergy.
- Avoid imported foods with ingredient lists in a different language. For example, imported chocolate bars may not list peanuts, even when they are present.
- Avoid any products that do not carry a complete

list of ingredients. For example, bulk foods and foods from on-site bakeries do not usually have ingredient lists.

- Have paper and a pen with you when you shop. If you have a question about a product, write down the product name and the company's phone number or address. Ask the food company whether the product contains peanut protein.



When preparing food:

- Children and adults should wash their hands before and after handling food and before and after eating food.
- Clean and sanitize work and cooking surfaces, utensils and any equipment that touches food.

Tips to teach children:

- Discourage children from sharing food at school.
- Encourage children to respect other children's allergies and not tease them.

Peanut-Free Lunch Ideas

A nutritious lunch should contain items from three to four food groups in *Canada's Food Guide*: Vegetables and Fruit (preferably some of each), Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives and/or Meat and Alternatives. Remember to always read the labels on pre-packaged foods or ingredients you use in cooking.

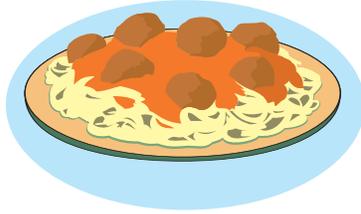
Vegetables and Fruit

- Fresh fruit
- Raw vegetable pieces
- Leftover cooked vegetables
- Canned fruit in juice
- Fruit juices
- Vegetable or tomato juice
- Vegetable-based soups
- Fruit salads



Grain Products

- Whole grain bread or bagel
- Whole grain pita, flat bread or tortilla
- Pasta or noodles
- Rice
- Couscous
- Whole grain crackers
- Whole grain Melba toast
- Whole grain cereal
- Small muffin



Milk and Alternatives

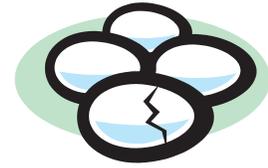
- 2%, 1% or skim milk (white or chocolate)
- Yogurt
- Kefir
- Cheese
- Cottage cheese
- Fruit smoothie
- Milk pudding
- Fortified soy beverage



Meat and Alternatives

- Canned fish (light tuna, salmon)
- Chicken, turkey or roast beef

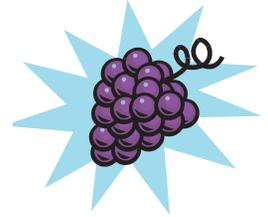
- Hummus
- Beans or lentils
- Tofu
- Hard-boiled egg



Peanut-Free Snacks

Remember to always check the labels of any pre-packaged foods and any ingredients that you use in cooking.

- Fresh fruit
- Raw vegetables with yogurt dip
- Apple sauce
- Canned fruit salad (in juice)
- Whole grain crackers and cheese
- Yogurt (plain or fruit)
- Milk (white or chocolate)
- Fortified soy beverage
- Whole grain cereal
- Homemade muffin
- Whole grain breadsticks with hummus or bean dip
- Mini pita stuffed with tuna salad



Sample Peanut-Free Lunch Menus

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Whole grain bagel Sliced turkey Milk pudding cup Baby carrots 100% orange juice	Whole grain flatbread Hummus Sliced vegetables Yogurt Water	Whole grain crackers Vegetable soup Apple Chocolate milk
 		 

Sources of Additional Information

The information in this factsheet does not replace any advice given by a doctor and does not provide all of the necessary information to manage food allergies.

Toronto Public Health

416-338-7600

Web site: www.toronto.ca/health

Nutrition Matters: Food Allergies... What's the Scoop?

Nutrition Matters: Food Allergies and Your Child

Health Canada Public Inquiries

613-957-2991

1-866-225-0709

Web site: www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/allerg/fa-aa/index_e.html

The Allergy/Asthma Information Association (AAIA)

111 Zenway Boulevard, Unit 1

Vaughan, ON L4H 3H9

Tel: 905-265-3322

Toll-free: 1-800-611-7011

Web site: www.aaia.ca

Anaphylaxis Canada

2005 Sheppard Avenue East, Suite 800

Toronto, ON M2J 5B4

Tel: 416-785-5666

Web site: www.anaphylaxis.ca

The Allergy/Asthma and Immunology Society of Ontario

2 Demaris Avenue

Toronto, ON M3N 1M1

Tel: 416-633-2215

Web site: www.allergyasthma.on.ca

Information for Schools and School Boards

- **Anaphylaxis: a Handbook for School Boards**

Health Canada and Canadian School Board Association

http://www.safe4kids.ca/content/schools/anaphylaxis_eng.pdf

- **www.eworkshop.on.ca/cfm/edu/anaphylaxis**

Ontario Ministry of Education and TV Ontario

This e-learning module assists Ontario schools to comply with Sabrina's Law. It provides information on developing strategies to help reduce the risk of exposure to triggers of anaphylaxis and how to respond in the event of an emergency.

For more information please call Toronto Health Connection at 416-338-7600 to speak with a Dietitian. For additional issues of Nutrition Matters, refer to publications on our Web site at www.toronto.ca/health.

