

Food Allergies 101: The Basics

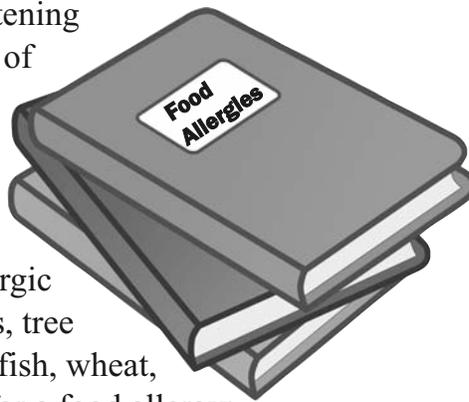
The role of the immune system is to protect the body from germs and disease. A food allergy is an abnormal response by the immune system to a food protein. When the food is eaten, the immune system thinks the food is harmful and releases histamines and other chemicals to “attack” the enemy.

Symptoms of an allergic food reaction may include: trouble swallowing, shortness of breath, repetitive coughing, a drop in blood pressure, nausea, vomiting, abdominal cramping, eczema, hives, itchy red rash, and/or swelling of the lips or tongue. A serious reaction is usually rapid in onset and is considered a life threatening medical emergency. Prompt injection of epinephren with an EpiPen is key to surviving such a severe reaction.

About 12 million Americans (1 in 25) have a food allergy. There are eight foods that cause 90% of the allergic reactions in the U.S. They are peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, pecans, etc), fish, shellfish, wheat, soy, eggs and milk. There is no cure for a food allergy; therefore, it is important to completely avoid food allergens. Be sure to read food labels every time, as manufacturers can change formulas without notice.

Allergens can also be in non-food items such as soaps, shampoos, skin products, medications, and pet food.

Wash hands, cooking utensils, and food preparation surfaces to avoid reactions from trace amounts of proteins left behind. Besides knowing your food allergen, also know how to recognize your symptoms. Keep medication, such as an EpiPen, available at all times for immediate use. You can find more information about food allergies at www.foodallergy.org



Dining Centers & Days of Service Call for Lunch Reservations

LINN COUNTY

Albany Senior Center

Monday - Friday (541) 967-7647

Brownsville Christian Church

Tues. & Thurs. (541) 466-5015

Lebanon Senior Center

Monday - Friday (541) 451-1139

Mill City, First Presbyterian

Tues. & Thurs. (503) 897-2204

Sweet Home Community Center

Mon., Tues., Fri (541) 367-8843

BENTON COUNTY

Corvallis Senior Center

Monday - Friday (541) 753-1022

LINCOLN COUNTY

Lincoln City Community Center

Mon., Wed., Fri. (541) 994-7731

Newport Senior Center

Mon., Wed., Fri. (541) 574-0669

Siletz, Tribal Community Center

Mon. & Wed. (541) 444-9169

Toledo, Trinity United Methodist

Friday (541) 336-2450

Waldport, South County Sr. Center

Mon., Wed., Fri (541) 563-8796