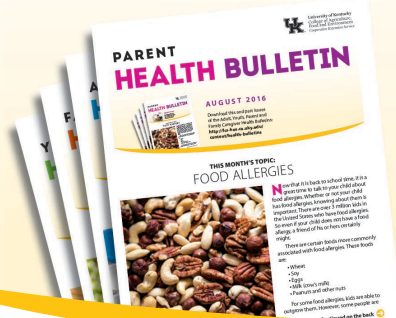


# PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



**AUGUST 2016**

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<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: FOOD ALLERGIES



**N**ow that it is back to school time, it is a great time to talk to your child about food allergies. Whether or not your child has food allergies, knowing about them is important. There are over 3 million kids in the United States who have food allergies. So even if your child does not have a food allergy, a friend of his or hers certainly might.

There are certain foods more commonly associated with food allergies. These foods are:

- Wheat
- Soy
- Eggs
- Milk (cow's milk)
- Peanuts and other nuts

For some food allergies, kids are able to outgrow them. However, some people are

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# Reading food labels is an important part of avoiding allergic reactions

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never able to outgrow food allergies and have to watch the foods they eat for their entire lives.

## What happens with a food allergy?

Normally, the body's immune system helps fight off sickness or things that enter our body and do not belong there. When a person has a food allergy, the immune system makes an error. A person with a food allergy has an immune system that thinks that a food is unsafe for him or her to eat. So although the food itself is not bad to eat, a person's body reacts to eating the food, and thinks it is a bad thing to have in the body.

There are many signs that show a person is having an allergic reaction. Some common signs are:

- Hives (a type of skin rash)
- Coughing
- Stomach pain
- Nausea/vomiting
- Tightness in the throat

Some people have very serious allergies. When there is a severe reaction, many problems can occur at one time and it can be life-threatening. This is called anaphylaxis. People with this type of allergic reaction have to be very careful. A person with this type of allergic reaction will likely carry a special medicine with them. The medicine, called epinephrine, usually comes as an injection that looks like a pen. If your child has severe reactions to allergies, you would have worked out where this should be kept at school and at home. Likewise, if

*If your child has severe allergies, you probably already pay attention to labels. Knowing where to look to make sure that the food was not made in the same factory as a food that causes trouble is an important skill.*



your child has a friend with this type of allergy, talk to his or her parent to make sure you have the needed medicine on hand.

Reading food labels is an important part of avoiding allergic reactions. If your child has severe allergies, you probably already pay attention to labels. Knowing where to look to make sure that the food was not made in the same factory as a food that causes trouble is an important skill. You may also ask to see if your healthcare provider can provide you with a listing of foods that are safe or not safe. This is a good list to have handy and be able to share with friends and family as needed.

Whether your child has a food allergy or not, it is important to know about them. Even if your child does not have an allergy, sharing with him or her information about food allergies may help in understanding why sharing food is not always a great idea.

## REFERENCE:

<http://kidshealth.org/en/kids/food-allergies.html>

PARENT  
**HEALTH BULLETIN**

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