

ALLERGEN AWARENESS FOR FOOD WORKERS



Even a small amount of an allergen can cause a life-threatening reaction. Workers must know the major food allergens, symptoms of an allergic reaction, and how to communicate about allergens used in the establishment.

Know the MAJOR ALLERGENS

These nine foods are the most common allergens, but people can be allergic to others.



Fish



Crustacean Shellfish



Wheat



Eggs



Milk



Peanuts



Tree Nuts



Sesame



Soybeans

Know the SYMPTOMS of allergic reactions

- Difficulty breathing, cough, wheezing
- Swelling of the tongue, lips, or face
- Dizziness, paleness, or confusion
- Itchy nose, mouth, or face
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea

Know what to do for ANAPHYLAXIS (life-threatening allergic reaction)

Immediately Call 911

- Request ambulance with epinephrine
- Have the individual take their medications such as epinephrine, antihistamines, or inhaler

Know what to ASK and WHO TO TELL

Talk with customers to understand their food allergy and carefully share the information with the manager or designated kitchen staff.

Know how to prevent CROSS CONTACT

Food allergens can transfer when foods, surfaces, and utensils touch. Allergens do not go away when cooked.

Wash with soap and water – allergens don't wipe off

Wash hands with soap and water and change gloves before preparing food. Always clean and sanitize surfaces between menu items.

Wash all surfaces to remove allergens:



Wash with warm,
soapy water



Rinse with
clean water



Sanitize &
air dry

Prevent Splatters

Keep cooking steam, flour dust, and crumbs from touching food.

Separate Ingredients

Change cooking liquids and oils to ensure ingredients haven't been mixed with allergens.

Correct Errors

If a mistake is made, remake foods instead of just removing the allergen from the plate.

Offer Substitute

Inform customer if unable to meet their request.