

What is a Food Allergy?

A food allergy is an adverse reaction to a food (usually a protein) triggered by the body's immune system. The first time the body is introduced to a new food, the body may feel it is harmful and creates antibodies to fight off the allergen. The next time the offending food is introduced, the body releases histamines and other chemicals to protect the body, which result in physical symptoms. The symptoms can trigger the cardiovascular, respiratory and/or gastrointestinal system as well as skin conditions. Specific symptoms are listed below.

MOST COMMON FOOD ALLERGIES

Ninety percent of individuals who have food allergies are allergic to one or more of the following food items:

Milk	Egg	Fish
Shellfish	Soy	Wheat
Peanuts	Tree nuts (walnuts, cashews, almonds, pistachios, etc.)	

The other 10% of food allergies can be of miscellaneous foods, but this does not mean that they are less severe of a reaction.

SYMPTOMS CAN OCCUR WITHIN SECONDS TO TWO HOURS AFTER INGESTION.

- Tingling sensation in mouth
- Swelling of tongue and throat
- Difficulty swallowing - having the sensation of fullness in the throat
- Hives, along with itching, flushed or pale skin (almost always present with anaphylaxis)
- Feeling of warmth
- Dizziness or fainting
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea

umassdining.com

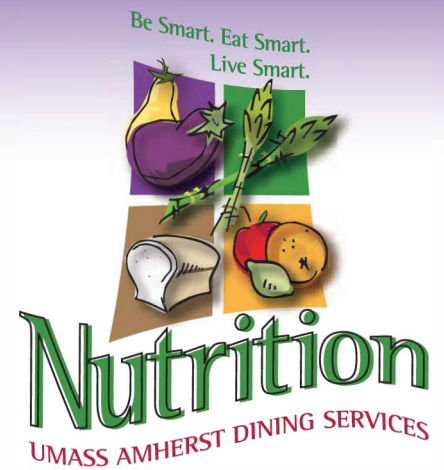
For additional information, contact:

Dianne Z. Sutherland, RD, LDN
UMass Dining
Worcester Dining Commons, 3rd floor
110 Stockbridge Road
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, MA 01003

Phone: (413) 545-2472
Fax: (413) 545-9673
Email: dietitian@umass.edu



Food Allergies & Healthy Eating



How Can I Help My Friend Who Has a Food Allergy?

Here are a few guidelines to help your friend stay safe.

DO:

- Learn what food(s) your friend must avoid.
- Ask about symptoms of a food allergy reaction.
- Find out what medications your friend uses to treat a reaction and how you can help in the event of an allergic emergency.
- Remind your friend to read labels.
- Wash your hands after eating.

DON'T:

- Pressure your friend to try a food.
- Ignore the symptoms of a reaction.
- Exclude your friend because of food allergy.
- Allow others to make fun of your friend.

Food Allergy Web Links

Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Alliance
www.foodallergyalliance.org

Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network
www.foodallergy.org

USDA Food and Drug Administration - FDA Consumer
www.fda.gov/ForConsumers/ConsumerUpdates/default.htm

American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology
www.aaaai.org

Asthma and Allergy Information and Research
www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~aair

Food Allergies News For Teens Entering College
www.faanteen.org

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
www.aafa.org

Anaphylaxis and Epi-Pens®

Anaphylaxis is the sudden onset of symptoms such as the throat closing up immediately and can even result in death. Individuals with food allergies which cause anaphylaxis should carry an EpiPen®, an auto injector that contains epinephrine. Epinephrine relaxes muscles in the lungs to improve breathing, stimulates the heartbeat and works to reverse hives and swelling. The effects of epinephrine last 10-20 minutes, so it is essential for emergency medical services to be contacted after injection.

- The individual should obtain an EpiPen® if recommended by his/her healthcare provider.
- The individual should carry the EpiPen® at all times and follow his/her healthcare provider's advice.
- Individuals should be able to recognize symptoms and inform their friends what to do in case of a reaction.
- Individuals should react quickly by injecting the EpiPen®.

If a reaction takes place in the dining commons, UMass Dining Staff can:

- Assist in finding the Epi-Pen® but not inject it
- Call 911 for immediate medical assistance



Dining Services Assistance

Unless we know you have a food allergy, we cannot help you. Please introduce yourself to the managers/chef at the dining commons for assistance. If you would like to set up an appointment with the dietitian, please call (413) 545-2472.

The UMass Food Allergy Prevention Program (FAPP) is to assist individuals with food allergies and/or intolerances that eat in the dining commons. In case a reaction does occur in the dining commons, the UMass staff will have information on each individual as to what their allergies/intolerances are and how to prevent a similar reaction in the future. For more details on FAPP, please call (413) 545-2472.

Once you have been treated, contact the manager of the dining commons or the dietitian at UMass Dining to report the incident so a full investigation can be conducted as to what caused the reaction.

Check the web site at www.umassnutrition.com for:

- **Daily Menu:** Get the ingredients, allergens and nutrient analysis of the recipes. Check out the food allergy filter to know what you can eat or not eat. Our staff can also assist you by making you a meal upon request.
- **Nutrition Education/Food Allergies Interactive Game:** Get general information on how to avoid the main allergens in the dining commons.