



FOOD ALLERGY BASICS

- Food allergy is a growing health concern in the U.S.
- The incidence of food allergy has doubled in the U.S. over the last 10 years.
- Scientists don't know why.
- More than 12 million Americans have food allergies. That's one in 25, or 4 percent of the population.
- The incidence is even higher in young children – one in 17 among those under age 3.
- About 2.2 million school-age children in the U.S. have food allergies.
- In the U.S., food allergy is the leading cause of anaphylaxis (a severe allergic reaction) outside the hospital setting and results in 150-200 deaths and more than 30,000 emergency room visits annually.
- Eight foods account for 90 percent of all food-allergic reactions in the U.S.: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (e.g., walnuts, almonds, cashews, pistachios, pecans), wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish.
- There is presently no known cure for food allergy.
- Strict avoidance of the food allergen is the only way to prevent a reaction.
- Even trace amounts of a food allergen can cause a reaction.
- Most people who've had an allergic reaction to something they ate thought that it was safe.
- Food allergies are life-altering for everyone involved and require constant vigilance.
- Early administration of epinephrine (adrenaline) is crucial to successfully treating anaphylactic reactions. Epinephrine is available by prescription in a self-injectable device (EpiPen® or Twinject®).

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