

# TOP 10 TIPS FOR FOOD ALLERGIES

**Food allergy:** When the body reacts to the protein of a food or ingredient as if it were harmful. The food protein that causes the reaction is called an allergen.

**Food intolerance:** A physiological response that often starts in the digestive system, and does not cause life-threatening reactions.

**1** Understand the difference between a food allergy and intolerance.

**2** Identify the nine major food allergens recognized in the United States: egg, fish, milk, peanut, sesame, shellfish, soy, tree nut, and wheat.

**3** Recognize the common signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction.

**4** Know that food allergies are a disability, and schools are required to make reasonable meal modifications.

**5** Communicate with staff regarding Standard Operating Procedures for allergy management.

**6** Include food allergy protocols within emergency preparedness planning.

**7** Be prepared to manage food allergies for the following events:

- Supply chain disruptions
- Food recalls
- Food expiring
- Food damage via cooking
- Cross-contact occurring
- Product ingredients changing without notice

**8** Educate your team on food allergies and their responsibilities; train new employees on food allergy management plans and review them regularly with all employees.

**9** Engage the community at least annually about food allergy policies.

**10** Use free resources to create and update your food allergy management plan.

This project was funded using U.S. Department of Agriculture grant funds. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender. The University of Mississippi is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA employer.

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Suggested Reference Citation:

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2023). *STAR webinar series – Strategies for managing food allergies in schools*. University, MS: Author.

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06/06/2023