

Manager's Corner

Eight Major Allergens

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PURPOSE

Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

VISION

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

MISSION

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

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Professional Standards

FOOD SAFETY AND HACCP TRAINING – 2600

Employee will be able to effectively utilize all food safety program guidelines and health department regulations to ensure optimal food safety.

2620 – Practice general food safety procedures.

2630 – Practice Federal, State, and local food safety regulations and guidance.

2640 – Promote a culture of food safety behaviors in the school community.

Introduction

Manager's Corner: Eight Major Allergens is designed for directors/managers to use in training their staff. Each lesson is roughly 15 minutes. This resource is series one of a continuous set of training resources designed to give directors/managers an easy-to-use lesson plan for training staff in various topics. *Manager's Corner: Eight Major Allergens* provides a method for using and training with many of the Institute of Child Nutrition's resources. Every lesson plan contains the following:

- learning objective,
- statement explaining the importance of the topic,
- list of materials,
- instructions on how to present the information,
- questions to ask staff, and
- additional resources to strengthen or refresh the knowledge of the director/manager.

Eight Major Allergens

Objective: Recognize the eight major allergens - milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, soy, fish, and crustacean shellfish – and possible food sources.

Why it is important: School nutrition employees should be familiar with eight major food allergens so they can be mindful of them on ingredient labels. These allergies cause roughly 90% of all food allergic reactions in United States.

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Marker
- Food Allergy Fact Sheets: www.theicn.org/foodsafety
 - Egg Allergies
 - Fish Allergies
 - Milk Allergies
 - Peanut Allergies
 - Shellfish Allergies
 - Soy Allergies
 - Tree Nut Allergies
 - Wheat Allergies

Instructions:

On a piece of flip chart paper, write the names of the eight major food allergens with space in between: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, soy, fish, and crustacean shellfish.

Pass out to the staff the eight Food Allergy Fact Sheets and have them look at the “What foods contain [Allergen]?” and “Common Menu Items that May Contain [Allergen]” sections. Have staff read through the list of the handout they received and give one to two food sources of the allergen that they were unaware contained that allergen. Write those sources under the appropriate allergen on the flip chart.

After that, ask the staff to add food sources for each allergen. Ask provided questions and refer staff to the Food Allergy Fact Sheets to help answer. Answer all staff questions when done.

Questions for the staff:

- Can egg substitutes be used to prepare foods for children with egg allergies?
 - **No. Typically, egg substitutes are made from egg whites, which are highly allergenic for children with egg allergies.**
- Can a child with a fish allergy eat Worcestershire sauce?
 - **No, it contains anchovies which is a fish.**
- If a product is labeled “dairy-free” or “non-dairy”, is it safe for a person with milk allergies?
 - **No. The term “dairy-free” does not have an FDA-regulated definition, so there is no assurance that the product does not contain milk proteins. The FDA definition of “non-dairy” states that the product can include milk proteins and still be labeled “non-dairy”. Ingredient labels should always be checked for the presence of milk even if one of these terms is used on the packaging.**
- What is a good shelf-stable alternative to a peanut butter sandwich for a field trip?
 - **One option may be to substitute the peanut butter with soy or sunflower seed butters (please see the question on nut and seed butters). A few other options include a cheese sandwich, hummus or bean dip and chips, or a pre-cooked meal carried in a cooler with temperature control.**
- What does crustacean shellfish mean?
 - **There are two types of shellfish: crustaceans (crab, lobster, and shrimp) and mollusks (clams, mussels, and oysters). Crustacean shellfish are considered the most allergenic. Because many people with allergies to one type of shellfish are also allergic to other types, it may be advised to avoid all shellfish.**
- Can soy be found in meat products?
 - **Yes, it can be used as a filler in processed meat such as chicken nuggets, hamburgers, and hotdogs.**
- What are some examples of tree nuts?
 - **Common nuts: almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, filberts, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, and walnuts.**
- Is gluten-free the same thing as wheat-free?
 - **Gluten-free diets are not the same as wheat-free diets. Gluten is found in wheat, barley, and rye.**

Additional Resources:

- Food Allergy Research Education - Tips for Avoiding Your Allergen:
www.foodallergy.org

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