

For Someone New to Food Allergies

I have been diagnosed with severe food allergies to:

So What Does This Mean?

A food allergy is an overreaction of the immune system to a specific food.

Allergic reactions can range from mild to severe.

Anaphylaxis is the most severe allergic reaction, which is a life-threatening allergic reaction that affects the entire body. Symptoms include trouble breathing, hives, swelling, tightness of throat, hoarse voice, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, fainting, low blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, and cardiac arrest.

Anaphylaxis can occur within minutes of exposure to the allergen, and must be treated with epinephrine immediately, as it can be fatal. An epinephrine autoinjector (or EpiPen) is a device for injecting epinephrine.

Food allergies are to be taken very seriously, as they can be life-threatening, and very difficult to deal with.

How Does This Affect Me?

Food allergies greatly restrict my diet and lifestyle.

Not only can I not eat the specific food allergens, but I have to be careful of cross contamination, which is the process by which allergens are unintentionally transferred to food not containing allergens, with harmful effect. I cannot eat anything that might be cross-contaminated with food allergens.

Food allergies can cause me anxiety when eating food or being in new environments.

How Can You Help?

Please do not feed or offer me any food allergens, or foods that may be cross-contaminated with food allergens. I need a safe environment (even allergens nearby me are not safe).

Please understand that I am not being picky, rude, or insensitive - but am dealing with a life-threatening allergy. This is not a choice.

If you see any symptoms of an allergic reaction, please use my EpiPen and call 911.

If you are confused about anything, ask me and I can try to help or explain!