

Grocery Shopping for Children with Food Allergies

get schooled in
ANAPHYLAXIS

At Home

Before you head to the grocery store, **compile a list of your child's allergic triggers**, and then "add on." This means that you should research each one of your child's allergic trigger foods to learn the many different names they might be listed as in various food products; then, add all of those names on to your food triggers list. For instance, if your child is allergic to milk, you'll need to check food labels for ingredients that contain milk protein, such as "casein," which is commonly used in processed foods. You can start by checking available lists from Kids With Food Allergies Foundation (KFA) to discover **hidden allergens in common allergic trigger foods** including eggs, milk, peanuts, soybeans, wheat, sesame and tree nuts. Remember, avoidance of allergens is the way to prevent a life-threatening allergic reaction.

At the Store

Why not strive for an A+ in label reading? Many times you may be able to readily identify specific foods that pose a risk to your child, such as peanuts or eggs, but packaged or processed foods can be much more difficult to select. Following are a few tips to keep in mind at the grocery store:

- ★ Make a habit of thoroughly reading the label of each food product you consider buying before adding it to your grocery cart. The label on a familiar food product may change suddenly, so read it as if for the first time, every time.
- ★ Compare the label ingredients with your "add on" list of alternative names for allergic trigger ingredients.
- ★ If you're unsure if a product contains an allergic trigger, avoid it altogether or write down the name of the product and the company that manufactures it. You can contact the company about the product ingredients and manufacturing process later, and decide if it's safe to purchase for your child next time.

"Cross-contact" can also be a risk with some processed food products. Often times, companies that manufacture a number of different food products cannot always guarantee that ingredients from one product have not come in contact with equipment or packaging used for another product. Some organizations, such as KFA and the Allergy & Asthma Foundation of America, recommend that individuals with food allergies carefully check food labels for warnings such as "may contain traces of" an allergen, or "produced on machinery that also processes" allergens, or "produced in a facility that processes" allergens and avoid consuming these foods.

The ABCs of Shopping with Food Allergic Children

Bringing a child with food allergies to a grocery store can be a challenge but also a fun, interactive way to start teaching him or her about how to choose safe foods and avoid allergic food triggers. Here are a few tips to help you navigate the grocery store:

- ★ **Avoid certain sections of the grocery store** with open bins of dried fruit, nuts and other exposed foods to prevent your child from accidentally touching an allergic trigger.
- ★ **Bypass food offered at the deli, salad bar, bakery or fish counter**, since you cannot guarantee which ingredients are contained in each food item. Also, cross-contact may occur through equipment such as meat or cheese slicers.
- ★ **Count your child in on the decision-making process** by letting him or her help decide on substitutes for popular "kid" foods to eat at home. As your child gets older, they can even help you read the food labels. Depending on your child's particular allergy, together you can consider replacing an allergic trigger food with a safe food. For instance, select sunflower butter instead of peanut butter for a peanut allergy or choose fruit ices instead of ice cream for a milk allergy.

The Get Schooled in Anaphylaxis initiative offers practical information to educate the school community to help those at risk for life-threatening allergic reactions avoid their triggers, recognize anaphylaxis signs and symptoms and understand how to quickly get appropriate treatment and immediate medical care when anaphylaxis occurs.

The Get Schooled in Anaphylaxis logo is a registered trademark of Mylan Specialty L.P. The Mylan Better Health for a Better World logo is a trademark of Mylan Inc. © 2017 All rights reserved. NON-2017-0488

 **Mylan**
Better Health
for a Better World™