

# Teen Guide: Having Fun, Dating and All Things Teen

get schooled in  
**ANAPHYLAXIS**<sup>®</sup>

By now, you are no stranger to managing your potentially life-threatening (severe) allergies. You know what foods or items you need to avoid and what to do if you experience anaphylaxis, a life-threatening allergic reaction. But no matter how well-versed you are in managing your severe allergies, it is important to continue to use what you have learned, stay educated on how to avoid your allergic triggers and know how to properly manage an anaphylactic reaction if one occurs.

Being a teenager is exciting – there are so many new experiences, and best of all, new independence. Some of these changes can be intimidating. You may find you are nervous about discussing your severe allergies with friends, or even a new boyfriend or girlfriend. Or you may find yourself faced with peer pressure to do something that you know could put you at risk. You deserve your new independence – so keep the following tips in mind over the next few years:

- ★ Avoid your allergic triggers. The best way to manage your severe allergies is to avoid anything that will trigger a reaction. No matter how much you want to eat what your friends are eating or share that delicious-looking dessert with your date, it is just too risky. And not only should you avoid sharing food, but you should also avoid sharing utensils and food containers.
- ★ Make sure you have the conversation upfront. Talk about your severe allergies with your friends or a date ahead of time so you can both be ready.
- ★ You should feel comfortable enough discussing the seriousness of your risk for a life-threatening allergic reaction with your friends. Your friends should know how to help you avoid your triggers, recognize the symptoms of anaphylaxis and help you if a life-threatening allergic reaction occurs and you are unable to help yourself (e.g., administer epinephrine, seek immediate medical care and then notify parents/caregivers).
- ★ Speak up at restaurants or at your friend's house to whoever is preparing your food. Hidden ingredients and cross-contact are risks when dining out, so be sure to clearly explain your allergies to a restaurant manager, server or a friend's parent.
- ★ Always have your epinephrine with you. Make carrying epinephrine a habit. Don't forget it or think you can leave it behind "just this once."

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.

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