



Fast Facts about Food Allergies & Teens

- Food allergy is a growing public health and food safety concern in the U.S. Scientists are reporting a **doubling of food allergy** over the past decade, particularly peanut allergy.
- Approximately **12 million Americans** suffer from food allergy, with 6.9 million allergic to seafood and 3.3 million allergic to peanut or tree nuts.
- About **1 out of every 25 school age children** in the United States suffers from a food allergy.
- **Teens are the highest risk group** for fatal, food-induced anaphylaxis. Most reactions occur when a teen is away from home and with friends.
- **Just one bite** of an allergy-causing food can be enough to cause a life-threatening reaction.
- Trace amounts of the food allergen can cause a reaction. Food-allergic individuals must be on guard for **hidden ingredients** (such as milk or peanuts) in **unsuspected places** such as candy, baked goods, trail mixes, sauces, desserts, and gravies, to name just a few.
- Most individuals who have had a reaction ate a food **they thought was safe**.
- Food allergies have a **significant emotional impact** on teens, particularly girls. Older teen girls are twice as likely as their male peers to say they are teased or feel left out because of their food allergy.
- In a recent survey, 68% of food-allergic teens said they thought their **lives would be easier** if their friends and peers knew more about food allergy. Approximately 60% of teens said they **wished their school would do more** to teach their friends and peers about food allergy.