



KidsHealth.org/classroom

Teacher's Guide

This guide includes:

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Standards

This guide correlates with the following National Health Education Standards:

Students will:

- Comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to access valid information and products and services to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to use decision-making skills to enhance health.
- Demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and avoid or reduce health risks.
- Demonstrate the ability to advocate for personal, family, and community health.

Your state's school health policies:
nasbe.org/HealthySchools/States/State_Policy.asp

Milk, eggs, wheat, and nuts are common ingredients in many foods, but they can cause serious reactions in kids and teens with food allergies. The questions and activities in this guide will help your students learn what food allergies are, what the common food allergens are, as well as how to identify food allergy reactions.

Related KidsHealth Links

Articles for Kids:

Food Allergies

KidsHealth.org/kid/ill_injure/sick/food_allergies.html

Help With Hives

KidsHealth.org/kid/health_problems/skin/hives.html

Articles for Teens:

Food Allergies

KidsHealth.org/teen/nutrition/diets/food_allergies.html

Egg Allergy

KidsHealth.org/teen/food_fitness/nutrition/egg_allergy.html

Milk Allergy

KidsHealth.org/teen/nutrition/diets/milk_allergy.html

Nut and Peanut Allergy

KidsHealth.org/teen/food_fitness/nutrition/nut_allergy.html

Discussion Questions

Note: The following questions are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

1. Make a list of the most common food allergens. In what foods are they found?
2. For some people, a food allergy may be a nuisance by causing a rash or a runny nose. For others, it can be life-threatening. Describe the reactions that food allergens can cause, as well as why the body reacts this way.
3. How are food allergies treated? Can people grow out of a food allergy?



Activities for Students

Note: The following activities are written in language appropriate for sharing with your students.

Fighting Food Allergens

Objectives:

Students will:

- Discover what food allergies are
- Learn how the immune system responds to food allergens
- Identify reactions to food allergies

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Video camera

Class Time:

2 hours

Activity:

A food allergy occurs when the immune system identifies a certain food as a threat to the body, much like it would react to germs that enter the body. As a result, the immune system kicks into gear and begins what's called the immune response. After you read the articles at KidsHealth and learn about food allergies, work in small groups to develop a skit portraying the body's response to a food allergen. Be sure to include what the allergen is, how the immune system deals with the allergen, and the reaction that occurs to this immune response. Finally, be creative and have fun depicting this process!

Extensions:

1. Use a video camera to turn your skit into a short film.
2. How can friends and adults support kids and teens your age with food allergies?
3. Staying away from food allergens can be tough for those with food allergies. Pick a common food that people are allergic to and challenge yourself not to eat it for an entire day (or even 2 days). Make sure you read food labels, ask friends what's in a homemade food, etc. At the end of the day, write down your reflections on this experience. Were you able to go the whole day without eating the food? What difficulties did you experience? How can you be more sensitive to someone with food allergies?



Hidden Ingredients

Objectives:

Students will:

- Examine food labels for common allergens
- Recognize hidden allergens in food

Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- Cookbooks or cooking website
- Hidden Ingredients handout (available at: KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/nutrition/food_allergies_handout1.pdf)

Class Time:

1 hour

Activity:

Staying away from food allergens may seem like a breeze – you just don't drink milk or eat peanuts, right? Unfortunately, it's not that simple. Food allergens are often hidden behind names such as casein and hydrolyzed vegetable protein. While they may appear to be unlikely suspects, casein is actually made from milk and hydrolyzed vegetable protein may contain peanuts. Read the articles at KidsHealth to discover how food allergens are hidden in foods and use the handout to examine three of your favorite foods to determine whether someone with food allergies could eat them. Did any of your findings surprise you?

Extensions:

1. Now that you understand the foods people with food allergies must avoid, use the recipes from a cookbook or cooking website to create a healthy dinner menu for someone with a specific food allergy.
2. On a sheet of paper, create a T-chart. In the left-hand column, list snacks that have common food allergens in them, and in the right-hand column, list healthy alternatives to those snacks.

Reproducible Materials

Handout: Hidden Ingredients

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/nutrition/food_allergies_handout1.pdf

Quiz: Food Allergies

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/nutrition/food_allergies_quiz.pdf

Answer Key: Food Allergies

KidsHealth.org/classroom/6to8/personal/nutrition/food_allergies_quiz_answers.pdf



Name:

Date:

Hidden Ingredients

Instructions: Use the articles at KidsHealth and the questions below to examine three food labels for products that might trigger food allergies. Then determine whether someone with food allergies could eat those products. Be sure to include your labels with your work.

1 Name of product:

Ingredients that would pose a threat to someone with food allergies:

2 Name of product:

Ingredients that would pose a threat to someone with food allergies:

3 Name of product:

Ingredients that would pose a threat to someone with food allergies:



Name: _____

Date: _____

Quiz

Instructions: Answer each question.

1. List three common food allergens.

2. List five possible reactions to these allergens.

3. When someone with a food allergy eats a food allergen, the body releases chemicals called _____ that cause an allergic reaction.

- a. epinephrine
- b. anaphylaxis
- c. histamines
- d. hives

4. Describe one of the ways doctors determine if a reaction is caused by a food allergy.

5. True or false: Once you have an allergy, you always have it.

6. True or false: If you don't have a food allergy when you're younger, you don't ever need to worry about food allergies.

7. When people have severe reactions to food allergens, they may need shots of _____.

- a. epinephrine
- b. histamine
- c. antibodies
- d. none of the above



Quiz Answer Key

1. List three common food allergens.

Any three of the following: peanuts, tree nuts, soy, wheat, dairy foods, seafood (fish and shellfish).

2. List five possible reactions to these allergens.

Any five of the following: rash or hives, runny nose, diarrhea, tightness in the throat, coughing, hoarse voice, wheezing, nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, tingling tongue or lips, anaphylaxis.

3. When someone with a food allergy eats a food allergen, the body releases chemicals called histamines that cause an allergic reaction.

- a. epinephrine
- b. anaphylaxis
- c. histamines
- d. hives

4. Describe one of the ways doctors determine if a reaction is caused by a food allergy.

Any one of the following: In a blood test, blood is drawn and exposed to an allergen to determine if antibodies are formed against the allergen. In a skin test, pricks are made on the skin and exposed to a liquid extract of the allergen – if the area gets red and raised, it's an allergic reaction.

5. True or false: Once you have an allergy, you always have it. *Some allergies can be outgrown such as those to milk and eggs.*

6. True or false: If you don't have a food allergy when you're younger, you don't ever need to worry about food allergies. *Allergies can develop throughout a lifetime.*
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7. When people have severe reactions to food allergens, they may need shots of epinephrine.

- a. epinephrine
- b. histamine
- c. antibodies
- d. none of the above