

SAFE METHOD:

CUSTOMERS – FOOD ALLERGIES



It is important to know what to do if you serve a customer who says they have a food allergy, because these allergies can be life-threatening.

PRE-PACKED FOOD

SAFETY POINT	WHY?
If someone asks if a pre-packed food contains a certain ingredient, show them the ingredients list and any warnings on the label. Never guess.	Some foods can contain ingredients that you might not expect them to contain. It is very important for people with a severe food allergy to check the label on all pre-packed foods. You can find out more at food.gov.uk/allergen-resources

UNWRAPPED FOOD

If you sell unwrapped food or food you wrap yourself, you need to take extra care to be aware of what ingredients they contain.	If someone has a severe allergy, they can react to even a tiny amount of the food they are sensitive to. So it is very important for them to know exactly what is in a food.
Keep a copy or record of the ingredient information for any food that you sell unwrapped or wrap yourself. If food contains one of the ingredients listed in the next page, you need to mention it in the description of the food, e.g. chocolate and almond croissant.	This is so you and your staff can check the ingredients if asked by a customer. Clear descriptions help people with food allergies to spot foods that are not suitable for them to eat.
When handling unwrapped food or preparing take-away food, make sure counter tops and equipment have been thoroughly cleaned first. Make sure staff wash their hands thoroughly before starting the task. If you have a self-service area, make sure separate containers and utensils are used for different food and they are never mixed up. If unwrapped foods contain one of the ingredients listed below, keep it separate from other food, e.g. keep bread rolls with sesame seeds away from plain rolls.	This is to prevent small amounts of the food that a person is allergic to from getting onto another food accidentally.

HOW DO YOU DO THIS

How do you check if food contains a particular allergen / ingredient?



THINK TWICE!

Which ingredients can cause a problem?

You must provide information about allergens to your customers if they are used as ingredients in the food and drink that you provide. You can find further information here: [food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/publication/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf](https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/multimedia/pdfs/publication/loosefoodsleaflet.pdf).

These are some of the foods people may be allergic to and where they may be found:

Nuts (Namely almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio, cashew, Macadamia or Queensland nut).	In sauces, desserts, crackers, bread, ice cream, marzipan, ground almonds, nut oils.
Peanuts	In sauces, cakes, desserts. Don't forget groundnut oil and peanut flour.
Eggs	In cakes, mousses, sauces, pasta, quiche, some meat products. Don't forget foods containing mayonnaise or brushed with egg.
Milk	In yoghurt, cream, cheese, butter, milk powders. Also check for foods glazed with milk.
Fish	In some salad dressings, pizzas, relishes, fish sauce. You might also find fish in some soy and Worcestershire sauces.
Crustaceans	Such as prawns, lobster, scampi, crab, shrimp paste.
Molluscs	These include mussels, whelks, squid, land snails, oyster sauce.
Cereals containing gluten (namely wheat (such as spelt and Khorasan wheat), barley, rye and oats)	Also check foods containing flour, such as bread, pasta, cakes, pastry, meat products, sauces, soups, batter, stock cubes, breadcrumbs, foods dusted with flour.
Celery	This includes celery stalks, leaves and seeds and celeriac. Also look out for celery in salads, soups, celery salt, some meat products.
Lupin	Lupin seeds and flour in some types of bread and pastries.
Mustard	Including liquid mustard, mustard powder and mustard seeds, in salad dressings, marinades, soups, sauces, curries, meat products.
Sesame seeds	In bread, breadsticks, tahini, houmous, sesame oil.
Soya	As tofu or beancurd, soya flour and textured soya protein, in some ice cream, sauces, desserts, meat products, vegetarian products.
Sulphur dioxide (when added and above 10mg/ kg in the finished food and drink)	In meat products, fruit juice drinks, dried fruit and vegetables, wine, beer.

WHAT TO DO IF THINGS GO WRONG

If you think a customer is having a severe allergic reaction:

- do not move them
- ring 999 and ask for an ambulance with a paramedic straight away
- explain that your customer could have anaphylaxis (pronounced 'anna-fill-axis')
- send someone outside to wait for the ambulance
- if the customer has an adrenalin or Epi pen, help them to get it.

HOW TO STOP THIS HAPPENING AGAIN

- Make sure all your staff understand how important it is to check all the contents of a product if asked by someone who has a food allergy.
- Review the way staff handle unwrapped food for a customer who has a food allergy.
- Make sure you keep accurate and updated ingredient information for all food, and staff know where to find this information and how to check it.
- Train staff again on this safe method.
- Improve supervision.

Write down what went wrong and what you did about it in your diary.



SAFE METHOD:



MANAGING FOOD ALLERGEN INFORMATION

How you handle allergens is important for food safety.

The introduction of allergen rules in December 2014, means it is a legal requirement for food businesses to provide information about the allergenic ingredients used in the food and drink they serve. You need to be able to supply information for each item on your menu that contains, as an ingredient, any of the 14 main allergens. (See Allergies Safe method in Cross-contamination Safe method)

WHAT TO DO	WHY?
<p>Customer information</p> <p>Allergen information must be provided. You can do this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in writing and up front, e.g. on a menu or chalkboard • by training staff to give this information <p>Staff should know where allergen information can be found or be able to handle allergen information requests.</p> <p>If the information is provided by staff, it must be accurate, consistent and up-to-date, e.g. using recipe sheets or a record of food labels.</p>	<p>Customers with allergies need to know this information so they can make safe food choices to avoid an allergic reaction.</p> <p>There should be a way to check that the information provided is correct and complete.</p>
<p>There should be clear signposting letting customers know where to obtain allergen information if they need it. It's a good idea to have a sign in your business to tell customers to ask for allergen information if they need it.</p>	<p>Customers should let you know if they need allergen information so you can help them make safe food choices.</p> <div data-bbox="1182 1088 1453 1312" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">FOOD ALLERGIES and INTOLERANCES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please speak to our staff about the ingredients in your meal, when making your order.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Thank you.</p> </div>
<p>If your menu/unwrapped food options change, make sure you change the list of ingredients with allergens for that food or drink.</p>	<p>If you do not have the correct ingredients listed, customers could get the wrong information and become ill from eating the food.</p> <div data-bbox="1182 1335 1453 1559" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Ingredients</p> <p>Water, Carrots, Onions, Red Lentils (4.5%)</p> <p>Potatoes, Cauliflower, Leeks, Peas, Cornflour, Wheatflour, Salt, Cream, Yeast Extract, Concentrated Tomato Pasta, Garlic, Sugar, Celery Seed, Vegetable Oil (Sunflower), Herbs and Spice, White Pepper, Parsley.</p> </div>
<p>Labelling and storage</p> <p>Ingredient containers need to be labelled clearly so you know what allergens are in them. Careful storage will help you do this. Check pre-packed food labels so you know what allergens are in them.</p>	<p>If food is not labelled clearly, you could use ingredients that might be harmful to a customer who has an allergy to them.</p>
<p>Deliveries</p> <p>Check deliveries to make sure you have the correct order and labelling information is always provided.</p>	<p>If you receive the wrong order or a different product, there may be different allergens in the food.</p>

THINK TWICE!

You need to know what allergens are in the food you prepare and have accurate information to give customers, if they ask. All staff should know how to handle requests for allergen information. Allergies can be life threatening.

