

INTRODUCTION

In order to manage food allergens, all employees must be aware of the procedures and techniques necessary to prevent inadvertent spreading of potentially harmful foods. Even trace amounts of certain food allergens can cause severe reactions, so it is very important that safe handling practices are followed.



ALLERGIC REACTIONS

An allergic reaction occurs when a person's immune system responds defensively to a normally harmless food. Each year approximately 30,000 people require emergency treatment and 150-200 Americans die from food allergen-related problems. Some symptoms of an allergic reaction are:

- Hives
- Abdominal Cramps
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Difficulty Breathing
- Swelling of Tongue, Throat or Face
- Asthma
- Rapid Drop in Blood Pressure
- Unconsciousness
- Anaphylactic Shock
- Death



FOOD ALLERGENS

The most common foods that may cause an allergic reaction are:

- **Peanuts**
- **Tree Nuts**
(for example: almonds, pecans, walnuts)
- **Crustaceans/Shellfish**
(for example: crab, lobster, shrimp)
- **Eggs**
- **Milk and Dairy Products**
- **Fish**
(for example: bass, flounder, cod)
- **Soybeans**
- **Wheat**





FOOD PACKAGING: ALLERGY AWARENESS

ALLERGEN AWARENESS

Employees who work in places where food is produced or packaged must be familiar with the steps that can be taken to eliminate the risk of spreading food allergens. This may include:

- Being familiar with all foods and potential allergens that you may come into contact with.
- Identifying high risk areas for food allergen transfer.
- Double checking products before labeling to prevent accidental consumption.
- Using proper cross contamination prevention techniques in all areas of operation.
 - Never handle safe foods or packaging after working with possible allergens.
- Store food products and packaging materials in their correct places to ensure that possible allergens and packaging materials for possible allergens are stored in separated areas from safe food ingredients.
- Consistently monitor daily production records and proper date coding (in the event of a recall).



CONCLUSION

Allergic reactions can be quite severe, but the risk of accidental consumption will be far less if employees are aware of possible allergens in their work area, use proper handling techniques, and adhere to the company's policies regarding food allergens.

