Food Service Employee Allergen Awareness

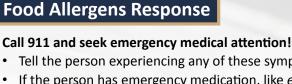
NET Health | Texas Department of State Health Services | Consumer Protection Division | Food & Drug Section | Retail Food Safety Operation

Food Allergens present a SERIOUS health risk to you and your customers and may even cause DEATH. Yet some simple actions can assure that you and your customers are fully informed, and that everyone has a safe experience. An allergic reaction is an immune system response. In some people, a food allergy can cause severe symptoms or even a life-threatening reaction known as anaphylaxis



Symptoms of an Allergic Reaction

- Hives
- Flushed skin or rash
- Tingling or itchy sensation in mouth
- · Face, tongue, and/or lip swelling
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Abdominal cramps
- · Coughing or wheezing
- Dizziness and/or lightheadedness
- Swelling of throat and/or vocal cords
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of consciousness



- Tell the person experiencing any of these symptoms to stop eating the food immediately.
- If the person has emergency medication, like epinephrine, and needs to use it, trained food service employees may assist the person to administer the medication.

Procedures for Preventing an Allergic Reaction

1. Food Service Employee Awareness:

- Be familiar with the current menu.
- Be able to identify all major food allergens used in the food establishment.
- Contact your supervisor for necessary allergen information.

Food Allergy Risk Factors

- Cross-contact of allergens with food not containing allergens
- Age

2. Prevent Cross-Contact of Allergens:

- Use different cutting surfaces before and after handling food with allergens.
- Clean and sanitize equipment and food contact surfaces before and after handling food with allergens.
- Wash hands and change gloves before and after handling potential food allergens.
- Lack of menu information
- Asthma
- Family history

- Lack of knowledge
- Other allergies

