



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH County of Riverside

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 124-17-DES  
DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION



Approximately 15 million Americans have a food allergy and the number of affected individuals is growing. A food allergy is caused when the body's immune system mistakenly thinks that a certain food, or food substance within a food, are a threat to your body and triggers a protective response known as an allergic reaction. Reactions can range from mild and harmless to severe and potentially life-threatening. The eight foods shown above cause 90% of the allergic reactions in the United States.

Following ingestion of a food allergen, a person with food allergies can experience a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction called **anaphylaxis**. This can lead to constricted airways in the lungs, severe loss in blood pressure, shock, and suffocation by swelling of the throat. Prompt administration of epinephrine (EpiPen) during early symptoms of anaphylaxis may help prevent these serious consequences.

OFFICES IN: RIVERSIDE, BLYTHE, CORONA, HEMET, INDIO, MURRIETA AND PALM SPRINGS  
For more information call (888) 722-4234 or visit [www.rivcoeh.org](http://www.rivcoeh.org)

## Symptoms of allergic reactions can include:

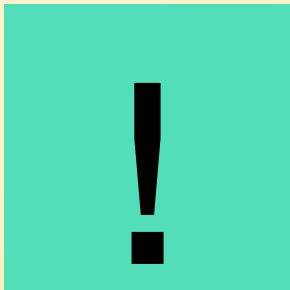
- Hives
- Rash or flushed skin
- Tingling or itchy sensation in the mouth
- Face, tongue, or lip swelling
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Coughing or wheezing
- Dizziness and/or lightheadedness
- Swelling of the throat and vocal cords
- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of consciousness

## What are the food facilities' responsibilities?

Effective January 1, 2017, California Retail Food Code section 113947(b) was amended to include eight major food allergens and requires the Person In Charge to comply with the following:

- Demonstrate adequate knowledge of the 8 major food allergens. This includes foods identified as major food allergens as well as the symptoms that the food allergen could cause in a person who has an allergic reaction
- Educate all employees at the food facility in regards to the information described above

## What steps can the food facility take to avoid CROSS-CONTACT?



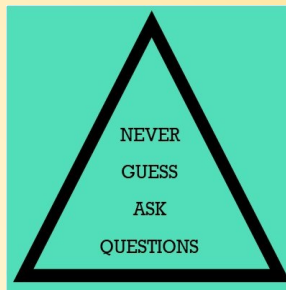
### TAKE ALL FOOD ALLERGY REQUESTS SERIOUSLY

The severity of the allergy could mean the difference between life and death.



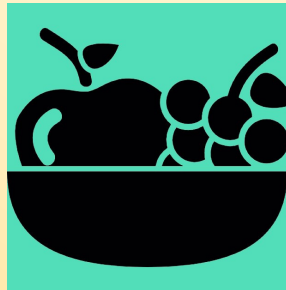
### PROPERLY WASH HANDS

Make sure hands are clean before preparing food for a person with a food allergy.



### MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND THE ALLERGY

Write down the customer's allergy and notify the manager. If you have questions, ask the customer.



### USE ONLY ALLERGEN-FREE INGREDIENTS

Always check all ingredients and labels on foods.



### AVOID CROSS-CONTACT FROM THE START

Start with properly cleaned and sanitized utensils and surfaces.



### CONSIDER AN ALLERGEN-FREE AREA

Designate a space in the kitchen for storage and preparation of allergen-free meals.