

# Food Allergy Awareness for Food Workers:

## What to Know and What to Do

### FOOD ALLERGENS CAN CAUSE ANAPHYLAXIS AND DEATH WITHIN MINUTES

#### Facts:

- Approximately **33 million Americans**, including **5.6 million children**, have food allergies.\*
- Any food can be an allergen. Even trace amounts of allergens can trigger an allergic reaction.
- The most common food allergens are known as the "Big 9" (see list below).

#### Symptoms:

*May range from mild to life-threatening.*

- Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- Hives on face and extremities
- Swelling of the face and extremities
- Tightening of the throat/difficulty swallowing
- Sudden cramps, diarrhea, or vomiting
- Loss of consciousness

### Food Allergies: The "Big 9"



**Crustacean Shellfish**



**Eggs**



**Fish**



**Milk**



**Peanuts**



**Sesame**



**Soy**



**Tree Nuts**



**Wheat**

### IF A CUSTOMER MENTIONS A FOOD ALLERGY, TAKE IT SERIOUSLY. IT'S IMPORTANT!

#### COOKS & CHEFS

##### Control Cross-Contamination

- Cooking oils, splatter, and steam from allergen-containing foods
- Wash your hands and change your gloves.
- Clean and sanitize food prep equipment and utensils.
- Carefully check ingredient labels.

#### SERVICE STAFF

##### Communicate

- Take the request seriously.
- Repeat what the guest says to ensure that you understand.
- Tell the Manager, Person-in-Charge, or Chef.
- Inform the guest of your findings.



**If a customer has an allergic reaction, call 911 immediately!**

#### Additional resources:

- [nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp](http://nj.gov/health/ceohs/phfpp)
- [foodallergy.org](http://foodallergy.org)
- [njrha.org](http://njrha.org)

\* Source: Food Allergy Research & Education  
[foodallergy.org/resources/facts-and-statistics](http://foodallergy.org/resources/facts-and-statistics)