

Food Allergy Do's and Don'ts

Food allergies are serious business. They impact more than **3 million Canadians**, with about half a million of those people being children. Those who don't have food allergies can help by understanding the condition and doing their part to create a safe environment to prevent serious reactions from occurring.

How? Here are some of our top **do's and don'ts** about avoiding cross-contamination, reading labels, and what happens when someone has a reaction.



Food Allergy Canada

Learn how to create a safe environment at foodallergycanada.ca



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- 1 Don't** use the same utensils to make foods that may contain a food allergen. Use one serving utensil per dish.
- 2 Don't** just pick off an allergen from a food and then serve it to someone with that allergy. For example, don't remove sesame seeds from the top of a salad and serve it to someone with a sesame allergy.
- 3 Do** use liquid soap and anti-bacterial commercial wipes to remove peanut allergens (such as peanut butter). Anti-bacterial hand sanitizers and water alone are not as effective.
- 4 Do** use disposable methods (such as paper towels or wipes) to clean surfaces because allergens can stay on sponges or towels.
- 5 Do** wash your hands well and often. It is one of the most effective ways to prevent cross-contamination.
- 6 Don't** rely on "free-from" claims (such as "peanut free") on packages, and **do** read the full ingredient list and any precautionary statements such as "may contain".
- 7 Do** ask your guests if they have any food allergies and how you can help accommodate them.
- 8 Do** use non-food treats (like stickers) to celebrate birthdays and holidays.
- 9 Do** use epinephrine (e.g. EpiPen®, ALLERJECT®) at the first sign of an allergic reaction, before calling 9-1-1 or someone's emergency contact person.
- 10 Do** make sure that if someone has a serious allergic reaction, they go to the nearest hospital right away (ideally by ambulance). The reaction could get worse or even come back.