

HOW-TO GUIDE

on using the Think Food Allergy resources



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Getting started

This is your how-to guide for the foodservice resources available at **ThinkFoodAllergy.ca**.

You may use the resources to help start your allergen management program, or to augment what you already have in place.

The resources have been developed in collaboration with members of the foodservice industry, and serve as a best practice reference.



Understanding food allergy

Food allergy is a serious medical condition that impacts over 3 million Canadians. The resources below can be used as training materials for foodservice staff to help them understand what food allergy is, and why it should be taken seriously.

"What is food allergy" video

3-minute training video with basic information on what food allergy is and why foodservice staff need to take it seriously.

How can it be used?

When onboarding new staff and reinforced on a regular basis, at least annually.

Tips

- Ensure all foodservice staff watch the video in full.
- Obtain any staff training sign-offs.
- Pulse check staff knowledge through question asking.
- Reinforce the message often during regular shift meetings, or more frequently as needed.



"What is food allergy?" fact sheet

1-page sheet that provides highlights on food allergy and actions foodservice employees can take to prevent allergic reactions.

How can it be used?

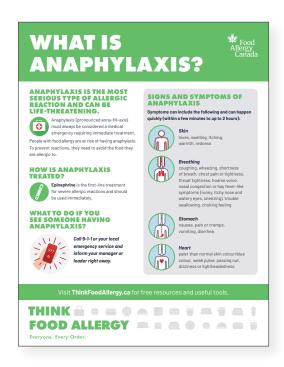
For training and education, communication and shift huddles, and as onboarding material.

Tips

- Print the PDF in colour or for a paperless approach, incorporate it into your virtual training program.
- Deliver this in the next team meeting or training (suggested to accompany the "What is food allergy" video).
- Obtain any staff training sign-offs.
- Pulse check staff knowledge through question asking.
- Reinforce the message often during regular shift meetings, or more frequently as needed.
- Consider using this as a poster.

Understanding anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis (pronounced anna-fill-axis) is the most serious type of allergic reaction. The resource below can be used in training foodservice staff to help them understand anaphylaxis and what to do if they see someone experiencing it.



"What is anaphylaxis?" fact sheet

1-page sheet that provides important information on how to recognize the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis, and how to respond.

How can it be used?

For training and education, communication and shift huddles, onboarding material, and reinforcing how to respond in an emergency.

Tips

- Print the PDF in colour or for a paperless approach, incorporate it into your virtual training program.
- Deliver this in the next team meeting or training.
- Obtain any staff training sign-offs.
- Pulse check staff knowledge by asking questions.
- Reinforce the message often during regular shift meetings, or more frequently as needed.
- Consider using this as a poster such as near your establishment's health and safety board – this information helps protect employee safety too!

The importance of communication

Clear communication is essential for effectively managing food allergy in foodservice and plays a key role in preventing allergic reactions. The below resource serves as awareness for foodservice staff on the importance of clear communication when serving a guest with food allergy.



Poster

Printable poster that provides important information on the high-level steps to communication when serving a food allergic guest, reinforcing food allergy as a serious condition and keeping it top of mind.

How can it be used?

For employee awareness on the steps that need to be taken when serving a guest with food allergy.

Tips

- Print the PDF in colour or for a paperless approach, incorporate it into your virtual training program.
- Deliver this in the next team meeting or training.
- Pulse check staff knowledge by asking questions.
- Reinforce the message often during regular shift meetings, or more frequently as needed.
- Place the poster in a high-traffic area at eye level.
- Avoid placing in oversaturated areas containing other communication.
- Replace or rotate poster regularly (keep it fresh!).

Always check ingredients

Individuals with food allergy need to know what's in their food to navigate a safe meal choice. They depend on foodservice staff to provide them with accurate ingredient information. The below resource can be used to check ingredients and provide accurate allergen information when serving a food allergic quest.



Food allergen menu matrix

A fillable PDF that easily captures the priority food allergen information ("Contains" or "May contains") for standardized menu items in a foodservice setting.

How can it be used?

To easily reference priority food allergen ingredients for standardized menu items.

This template requires an update for any ingredient changes. It does not replace the need for staff communication to confirm that there have been no changes or substitutions to the ingredients. It is not recommended for daily specials, featured dishes, or menu items that have frequent changes to their ingredients.

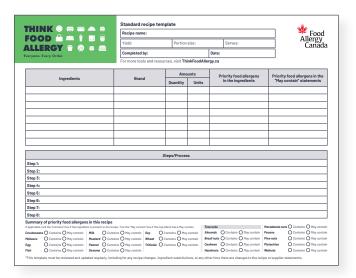
Steps

- 1. Download the fillable PDF, or print the matrix to complete by hand. As a best practice, keep the template in a digital format to avoid outdated paper copies that may have inaccurate food allergen information.
- **2.** The top of the matrix lists Health Canada's priority food allergens. In the respective column, put a "C" for any menu items that CONTAIN the priority food allergens, and "M" for any menu items that MAY CONTAIN priority food allergens, or as noted in the precautionary allergen labelling statement.
- 3. Sign and date the matrix.
- **4.** Review regularly, and update the matrix to reflect recipe changes, ingredient substitutions, or any other time there are changes to the recipe or supplier statements.

Note: It is recommended to assign responsibility to designated employees to oversee the review and update of the matrix and ensure the accuracy of its information.

Always check ingredients

The below resource can be used to check ingredients and provide accurate allergen information when serving a food allergic guest.



Standard recipe template

A fillable PDF that lists the recipes of the standardized menu items.

How can it be used?

To easily reference ingredient and priority food allergen information for standardized menu items.

This template requires an update for any ingredient changes. It does not replace the need for staff communication to confirm that there have been no changes or substitutions to the ingredients.

Steps

- 1. Download the fillable PDF, or print the template to complete by hand. As a best practice, keep the template in a digital format to avoid outdated paper copies that may have inaccurate food allergen information.
- **2.** List any priority food allergens that are present as ingredients or listed in the "Contains" statement on any bulk ingredient food labels.
- **3.** List any priority food allergens mentioned in the precautionary allergen labelling statement ("May contain") on any bulk ingredient food labels (e.g., sauces, marinades, etc.).
- 4. List the food allergens used in the recipe.
- **5.** Sign and date the template.
- **6.** Review regularly, and update the template for recipe changes, ingredient substitutions, supplier changes, or any other time there are changes to the recipe or supplier statements.
- 7. Consider regular checks or inspections to ensure the standardized recipe is being followed properly.

Note: It is recommended to assign responsibility to designated employees to oversee the review and update of the template and ensure the accuracy of its information.

Thank you for creating an inclusive environment

Your efforts toward food allergen management help ensure a safe dining experience for millions of Canadians, along with their friends and families. Together, we can create an inclusive environment where both foodservice employees and guests can enjoy their meal experience, and dine with confidence.

Contact us

For questions on the resources or for additional support with your food allergen management efforts, please contact us at **info@foodallergycanada.ca** or at 1866 785-5660.

Visit **ThinkFoodAllergy.ca** often as we continue to add more resources.

Food Allergy Canada is a national charity and the country's leading patient organization committed to educating, supporting, and advocating for the more than 3 million Canadians impacted by food allergy. We focus on improving daily quality of life by providing education and support needed to effectively navigate this medical condition, building informed and supportive communities, and acting as the national voice on key patient issues.



Everyone. Every Order.

For more free foodservice resources and tools, visit