

# Your guide to: Peanut Allergies



Peanut allergies result from a hypersensitivity of the immune system to the protein in peanuts. Symptoms occur within minutes of ingesting peanuts. Therefore peanuts and products containing peanuts must be avoided and you must carry epinephrine

## Read labels carefully

### **Avoid foods that contain the following:** (not a complete list)

- Peanuts/"may contain peanuts"
- Peanut flour
- Peanut butter
- Mixed nuts
- Peanut oil
- Unidentified vegetable oil
- Ground nuts
- Hydrolyzed plant protein (unidentified source)
- Arachis oil
- Beer nuts
- Goober peas/huts
- Cacahouette
- Artificial nuts (Mandelona and NuNuts)

### **What about peanut oil?**

Peanut oil should be avoided. Sometimes the peanuts are processed enough that it may not cause a reaction, however it is best to avoid it rather than risk it.

### **Should I avoid all nuts?**

Peanuts are legumes, not tree nuts, therefore if there is no chance of cross-contamination, and you are not allergic to tree nuts, it is safe to eat them. If you are unsure of cross-contamination, then do not eat them.

### **Avoid buying from bulk food sections**

- higher risk for contamination

### **Should I avoid peas/beans and other legumes?**

Unless you have had an allergic reaction to these in the past, there is no need to avoid them. There is only a 5% cross-reactivity rate.

### **What about coconut or nutmeg?**

They are not peanuts, therefore if you have not reacted to them before, you do not need to avoid them.

### **Can I outgrow my peanut allergy?**

20% of peanut allergic patients can outgrow their allergy. You **MUST** be tested by an allergist to determine if you have lost your allergy. **DO NOT** try eating peanuts on your own at home.

### **Can I have a reaction to the smell of peanuts?**

No. Peanut allergies are triggered by proteins: there is no proteins in odor. Some people may feel sick, but this is from an aversion and does not require treatment with epinephrine.