

Client Name _____ Date _____

RD/DTR _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Tips for Managing Multiple Food Allergies

Understanding Food Label Advisory Statements

- Some food manufacturers voluntarily print advisory statements on food labels if there is a risk that a “safe” food came into cross-contact with a food allergen, such as egg, milk, fish, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, or shellfish. Look for advisory labeling such as “may contain [allergen]” or “produced in a facility that also produces products containing [allergen].”
- However, advisory labeling is **not** required by law. The absence of an advisory statement does not necessarily mean there is no risk of cross-contact with allergens.
- You may need to call the manufacturer for more information about how the product was manufactured.
- The type of advisory statement may not reflect risk. For example, “manufactured in a facility that also manufactures products containing [allergen]” may not be safer than “may contain [allergen].”
- Avoid any product that has an advisory statement for your allergens.

Nutrition Tips

- A multiple food allergen meal plan should be used under the supervision of your doctor and a registered dietitian (RD). It is generally used as a short-term diet to diagnose allergies. Please talk with your doctor about how long you should follow this meal plan.
- Try to eat a varied diet, including lean meats and poultry, dried beans and peas (except peanut and soy), fruits, vegetables, whole and enriched alternative grain products, and healthy oils.
- You may need a multivitamin and mineral supplement. Discuss supplement options with your health care provider to find a supplement that is safe and adequate.

Safe Food Preparation Tips

- Wash your hands before preparing foods and after touching any product containing an allergenic ingredient.
- Before preparing food, clean all cooking and food preparation surfaces, cooking equipment, and utensils with hot, soapy water.
- Prepare allergen-free foods first. Cover and remove them from the cooking area before cooking foods that contain allergens.

Shopping Tips

- Read product labels each time you purchase an item, even if you have purchased the item before. Ingredients may change at any time without notification. Note that different sizes and versions of the same product may contain different ingredients.

- Delis slice various types of luncheon meats and sometimes even cheese on shared slicers. Luncheon meats may contain allergenic ingredients. Choose instead a safe, packaged luncheon meat, or ask your deli to slice your order first thing in the morning on a clean machine and set it aside for you to pick up later in the day.
- Nonfood items (such as soaps, shampoos, sunscreens, and medications) may contain allergens and are not covered under the food allergen labeling law. Read ingredient lists carefully.

Eating Out Tips

- When eating in restaurants, use “chef cards” (available from the FAAN Web site: <http://www.foodallergy.org>). These cards list all the ingredients you need to avoid. Speak directly to the manager and inform him or her that you have a food allergy. Present your chef card, and discuss which ingredients to avoid as well as how to avoid cross-contact.
- Avoid complex dishes and desserts with multiple ingredients or sauces. These may have hidden allergens.
- Avoid foods that are fried in a deep-fat fryer that may have been used to fry other foods with allergenic ingredients.
- Be aware that cross-contact is likely in salad bars and buffets. Serving utensils may be shared, and foods can spill and splash.
- Look for food allergen information on Web sites for some fast-food and chain restaurants. However, be aware that restaurant companies may use multiple food suppliers, and ingredients or recipes may change over time. Always reconfirm that food is safe before ordering.

Travel Tips

- Plan ahead!
- Carry extra emergency medications when you travel. Keep a supply of these medications with you at all times. Lost luggage is a true disaster if the luggage contains your emergency medication and treatment plan.
- Know how to call for emergency services where you are staying. Find out the location and distance of local hospitals, and keep the contact information of local medical professionals handy.
- Pack allergen-free snacks and some staple foods.
- If necessary, request special hotel accommodations, such as a room with a refrigerator or kitchenette.
- Investigate restaurants ahead of time, and call ahead with special requests. If you are traveling abroad, consider chef cards printed in the destination’s native language. Chef cards in several languages are available at the Food Allergy Initiative Web site (<http://www.faiusa.org>).
- When traveling by plane:
 - Bring medications in their original packaging and keep them with you at your seat.
 - Pack your own safe meals and snacks for the trip and include extra food in case there are delays. People with allergies should not eat the airline food.
 - Wipe down the plane seat to prevent any potential contact reactions.
 - More information on air travel is available on the FAAN Web site (<http://www.foodallergy.org>) and the Food Allergy Initiative Web site (<http://www.faiusa.org>).

Notes: