

10 FAACTs *about* Food Allergies

- 1 Food allergies affect **as many as 32 million** Americans, including 6 million children. Studies report that **1 in 13** children and up to **1 in 10** adults in the United States have a food allergy. For children, this averages to **two** children per classroom.
- 2 A food allergy is an **immune system response** to a food that the body mistakenly believes is harmful.
- 3 Nine foods account for 90% of all food allergy reactions: **Peanuts, Tree nuts, Milk, Egg, Wheat, Soy, Fish, Shellfish, and Sesame**. However, almost any food can cause a reaction.
- 4 There is **no cure** for food allergies and **strict avoidance** is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction.
Trace amounts of an allergen can trigger an allergic reaction in some individuals.
- 5 Past reactions to a food allergy **do not predict future reactions!** Someone can still have a life-threatening reaction to a food they are allergic to, even if they have never had a serious reaction before.
- 6 Symptoms can **develop rapidly** after exposure to an allergen, often within minutes and usually within 30 minutes. However, it can take up to 2 hours for symptoms to occur after exposure to a food allergen.
- 7 Anaphylaxis is a **serious allergic reaction** that comes on quickly and has the potential to become life-threatening. Anaphylaxis requires immediate medical treatment, including an injection of epinephrine and a visit to the emergency room.
- 8 It is important to be deliberate and not hesitate when you have to use epinephrine. The device is **potentially life-saving**. A call to 9-1-1 and a trip to the emergency room should always follow epinephrine administration.
- 9 Individuals at risk should carry **two epinephrine auto-injectable devices** with them at all times AND an **Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Action Plan** signed by a board-certified allergist.
- 10 **Food allergies continue to rise** and are a safety and public health concern across the United States. You can get free resources and find out how to help keep those with food allergies safe at: