

Be A PAL

FOOD ALLERGY AWARENESS PATCH PROGRAM



The food allergy awareness patch program, Be A PAL: Protect A Life™ aims to educate girls on how to better understand food allergies, and to know the importance of how to help an individual suffering from an allergic reaction.

It can be a risky situation when someone is having an allergic reaction. Every three minutes a food allergy reaction sends someone to the emergency room. That's about 200,000 ER visits per year!

Food allergies can affect anyone at any age and chances are that you already know someone living with a food allergy.

By learning about food allergies, you can help allergic individuals avoid risks, and know what to do if a reaction should occur.

Once you complete this patch program you should feel confident in the following:

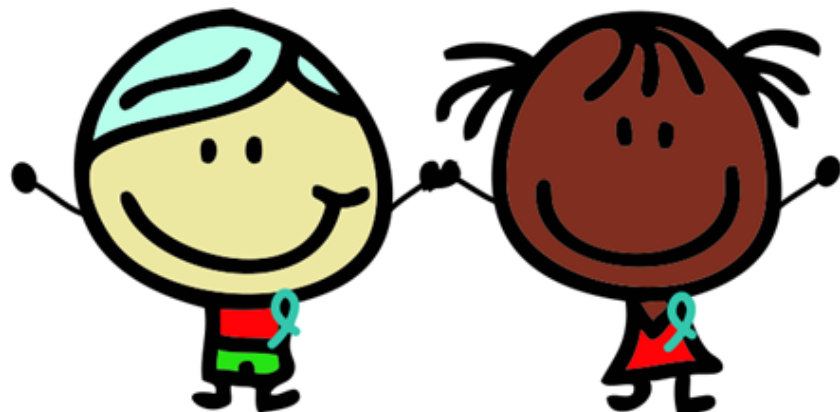
- Being able to identify common allergens
- Preparing allergy-friendly foods with substitutes
- Knowing what to do if someone suffers from a reaction

THE BE A PAL PROGRAM

The “Be a PAL: Protect A Life from Food Allergies,” program from Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) helps children learn how to be a good friend to kids with food allergies.

If you have a friend with food allergies, learn to be her PAL:

- Know what food your friend is allergic to and help her avoid them
- Don't share food with your food-allergic friends
- Wash your hands after eating, to prevent traces of an allergen from being passed along to your food-allergic friend
- Know what medications your friend needs and where she keeps them
- If your friend starts to show any of the signs of an allergic reaction, get help quickly! Even if you aren't sure, it's better to get help and not need it than not to act fast enough if your friend is having a reaction





BE A PAL PATCH REQUIREMENTS

Girl Scouts is girl-led, girl-driven! This patch program allows girls to select a variety of activities to earn their Be A PAL patch.

- Girl Scout Juniors can select any 5 of the first 10 requirements
- Girl Scout Cadettes can select any 7 of the first 16 requirements
- Girl Scout Seniors can select any 8 of the 20 requirements

Contact the Food Allergy Alliance of the Mid-South (FAAM) to schedule your Be a PAL workshop for your troop. Once you've completed your workshop, select the necessary number of requirements below to earn the Be A PAL food allergy awareness patch.

- 1 Read your labels for one day to find egg allergens.** People who have food allergies must avoid any trace of the food to which they are allergic. Imagine you are allergic to eggs and you know that even the smallest bite of a food that contains egg will make you really sick. Read the label of every food you eat. (See page 16 for a list of ways egg can appear on an ingredient statement.) How did you feel after doing this for a day? What types of situations did you have to look out for? How would you feel if you had to avoid egg all the time?
- 2 Plan an allergen friendly menu.** What extra steps would you have to take in planning your next camping trip if one of the girls in your troop was allergic to milk? With a group, plan menus to ensure that she would be able to eat everything. List some milk-free alternatives to traditional camping foods, such as s'mores.
- 3 Research the differences in a general physician and an allergist.** What is the difference between a general family doctor and an allergist? What do allergists do? Make an advertisement for a children's allergist.
- 4 Create a safe school environment.** Some schools have programs in place to help provide a safe environment for children with food allergies. For example, some schools assign peanut-free tables in the cafeteria; others don't allow eating in the classroom and don't allow food to be used in craft projects. Pretend you are a school principal. What plans would you put into place to help food-allergic students avoid a problem food? How would these plans affect all the other students in the school? Create a poster listing your plan and how it will help children with food allergies and share it with your troop. Take a survey. How would everyone feel about following your plan? How would they feel about it if they were the food-allergic student?
- 5 Plan a party.** Many parties involve food. Pretend that you are planning a party and you want to invite all your friends, including one who is allergic to eggs, and another who is allergic to peanuts and tree nuts. What foods, activities, and party favors will you plan to use so that all the guests can enjoy everything?
- 6 Spot the signs.** If a friend is having a food-allergic reaction, actions as simple as recognizing symptoms and seeking medical treatment immediately can make a BIG difference. Make a poster listing all the common symptoms of an allergic reaction and outlining what you should do if a friend is having an allergic reaction. Share your poster with your troop.
- 7 Learn to be inclusive.** Sometimes kids with food allergies will get teased or harassed by other students. How would you feel if you were being teased just because you couldn't eat some of the same foods as everyone else? With a group, discuss ways you could help someone who is getting teased because of her food allergy.





8 Interview someone your age with food allergies and see how they feel.

Plan a “food allergy awareness party” to share what you’ve learned with another Girl Scout troop. Give a presentation to educate others about food allergies. Be sure to list the symptoms of an allergic reaction and emphasize the seriousness of food allergies. Prepare and serve treats that are free of some of the most common food allergens, such as milk, eggs, wheat, peanuts, tree nuts, or soy. Make ingredient labels for all foods and post them next to each item to help your friends learn.

9 Participate in the Teal Pumpkin Project. Host a Teal Pumpkin Project event or party to raise awareness of food allergies and promote inclusion of all trick-or-treaters throughout the Halloween season.

10 Read recipes. Sometimes recipes contain surprise ingredients. For example, did you know that peanut butter is sometimes used to thicken chili or that walnuts are sometimes added to blue cheese dressing? Read some cookbooks or recipe pages of a magazine. Did you find any ingredient surprises? Find and share an example of where milk, eggs, peanuts, or tree nuts have been used in a recipe that you would not expect.

11 Put on a play. Script a situation where a food-allergic friend is having a reaction. Act out some things that others could do to help this person. Share your play with other troops or your community. If possible, videotape your play.

12 Invite a local allergist to speak to your troop. Ask the speaker to talk about the major concerns of people with food allergies, the diagnostic process, and what advice is given to patients who have just been diagnosed with a food allergy. What other types of careers deal with food allergy? How do people get into the food allergy field? What education is necessary to become an allergist? What are the pros and cons of working in this field?

13 Survey your community. Develop and administer a survey to members of your school or your service unit to gauge the level of food allergy awareness in your area. Analyze and share your results by creating charts or posters. Include food allergy facts and ways to help a food-allergic individual. (See page 9 for ideas.) With permission, post them in your community, such as in a grocery store or a library.

14 Discuss healthy diets. Many people who have food allergies, especially those with multiple food allergies, visit a dietitian to ensure that their diet is nutritionally balanced. Interview a dietitian to find out how a diet is analyzed. What substitutions does he or she suggest to people allergic to the most common food allergens?

15 Do online research. The Internet can be a great resource for people with food allergies since many national chains and fast food restaurants post menus and ingredient statements on their websites. Pretend that you have a tree-nut allergy and visit the website of your favorite fast-food restaurant to see what foods you would still be able to eat. Find the “allergen menu”, sometimes it is listed under “Menu” and sometimes under “Nutritional Information”. Were you surprised at any foods that contained tree-nuts?

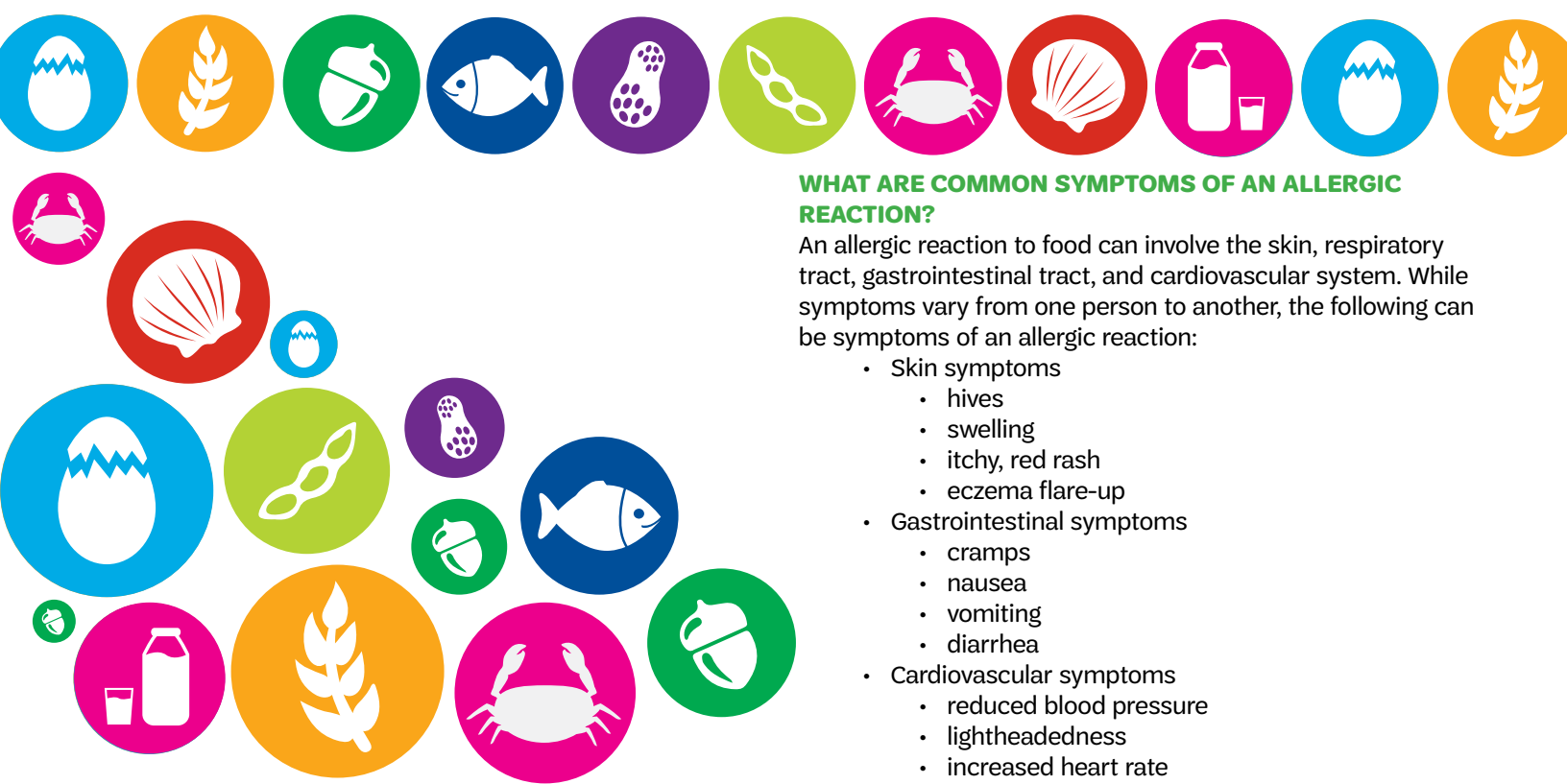
16 Discover stereotypes. Examine how food-allergic people are portrayed in movies, books, television shows, and other media. Determine how this portrayal affects the public perception of living with food allergies. Find at least three examples of characters with food allergies. How well do you think they were depicted? What did the public learn about food allergies in this movie? How would you revise those characters to make them more realistic?

17 Take a closer look at labels. Many food labels list “artificial flavors” or “natural flavors” on the ingredient statement, yet these flavors can contain food proteins to which individuals are allergic. Pretend that you are allergic to mustard. Find an ingredient label that lists natural or artificial flavors, and, with permission, call the food manufacturer to ask if mustard is present in any of those flavorings. How was your experience calling the manufacturer? Would you have felt differently if the answer to your question meant the difference between having a serious reaction or continuing with your day?

18 Try a new recipe. Cooking without certain foods can sometimes be tricky. Select a recipe and adapt it to be wheat-free. You may need to try several different combinations of non-wheat flours before you find one that works. (Check out the allergy-free cooking tips on page 10). Try the adapted recipe. How did it taste?

19 Play food detective. Watch how someone prepares food at home. See if you can identify ingredients or practices that may cause a problem for someone with a food allergy, and pinpoint where cross-contact may occur. Note some things you could do to help make the kitchen safer for people with food allergies.

20 Review the research. Some allergists concentrate on research in food allergies, as opposed to primarily treating patients. Read about the latest food allergy research at www.foodallergy.org. Which kind of allergist career interests you more? Write about a recent finding in food allergy research.



WHAT ARE COMMON SYMPTOMS OF AN ALLERGIC REACTION?

An allergic reaction to food can involve the skin, respiratory tract, gastrointestinal tract, and cardiovascular system. While symptoms vary from one person to another, the following can be symptoms of an allergic reaction:

- Skin symptoms
 - hives
 - swelling
 - itchy, red rash
 - eczema flare-up
- Gastrointestinal symptoms
 - cramps
 - nausea
 - vomiting
 - diarrhea
- Cardiovascular symptoms
 - reduced blood pressure
 - lightheadedness
 - increased heart rate
 - shock
- Respiratory symptoms
 - itchy, watery eyes
 - runny nose
 - stuffy nose
 - sneezing
 - coughing
 - itching or swelling of lips, tongue,
 - throat
 - change in voice
 - difficulty swallowing
 - tightness of chest
 - wheezing
 - shortness of breath
 - repetitive throat clearing

WHAT IS A FOOD ALLERGY?

A food allergy involves an interaction between a food and the immune system. Although a food, such as soy, is harmless to most people, an allergic person's immune system misinterprets the protein in the foods as being harmful and creates antibodies to fight off that food. Each time the allergic person eats that food, the body's immune system launches an attack by releasing histamine and other powerful chemicals. The release of these chemicals causes the symptoms of an allergic reaction.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ALLERGY AND AN INTOLERANCE?

Many people think that food allergy and food intolerance mean the same thing, but they do not. A food intolerance is an adverse food-induced reaction that does not involve the immune system. Lactose intolerance is one example of a food intolerance. A person with lactose intolerance lacks an enzyme that is needed to digest milk sugar. When the person digests milk products, symptoms such as gas, bloating, and abdominal pain may occur. With a food allergy, the immune system identifies a food as being an enemy, and when the allergic person eats that food, the immune system tries to "fight off" the enemy. Symptoms can range from mild to severe (see pages 5 & 6).

HOW COMMON ARE FOOD ALLERGIES?

Food allergies affect 6 percent of children and 11 percent of adults in the United States, or approximately 32 million Americans.

WHAT FOODS CAUSE MOST ALLERGIC REACTIONS?

Eight foods account for 90 percent of the allergic reactions—milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (such as walnuts, pecans, almonds, and cashews), soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish (including shrimp, crab, and lobster). These are known as the "Top 8".

WHAT IS ANAPHYLAXIS?

Anaphylaxis is a sudden, severe allergic reaction that involves various areas of the body simultaneously. In extreme cases, it can cause death. Some people call this type of reaction a general reaction or allergic shock.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF AN ANAPHYLACTIC REACTION?

- tingling sensation, itching, metallic taste in mouth
- hives (it is possible to have anaphylaxis without any skin symptoms, such as hives or rash)
- sensation of warmth
- asthma symptoms
- swelling of the mouth and throat
- difficulty breathing
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- cramping
- drop in blood pressure
- loss of consciousness

These symptoms can appear immediately, or may develop over hours.

CAN SOMEONE DIE FROM ANAPHYLAXIS?

Yes, anaphylactic reactions can be fatal. That's why it is so important to act quickly to try to stop the reaction. The difference between acting fast and waiting to see if the symptoms will go away can mean life or death. Fortunately, anaphylactic reactions are only rarely fatal, and most people survive them.

WHAT IS IT LIKE TO HAVE A FOOD-ALLERGIC REACTION?

Reactions can range from hives or gastrointestinal problems (such as cramping, diarrhea, and vomiting) to difficulty breathing and can be life-threatening. Regardless of the level of a reaction, however, it is always scary.

Some kids get embarrassed when they realize they are having a reaction. They try to quietly take care of the situation, or hope that by ignoring it, their reaction will just go away. Others feel themselves getting sick and go to the bathroom alone, trying not to make a scene. This is very dangerous, because if the reaction progresses more quickly than expected, the allergic person could lose consciousness and be unable to help herself.

If you think a friend might be having a reaction, it's important to act quickly. Don't wait to see if the reaction will worsen. If your friend has a history of severe reactions, get help immediately (for example, call 911).

HOW DOES SOMEONE AVOID HAVING A REACTION?

Since there is no cure or preventative medication available for food allergy, strict avoidance of the food in question is the only way for someone with food allergies to avoid having a reaction. Food-allergic people must learn the scientific and technical names for foods, read the ingredient statements on every food they eat, and avoid products that contain the offending food.

Most people who have experienced food-allergic reactions knew about the food they were allergic to and unknowingly ate that food in a product they thought was safe. How does this happen? In some cases, the person didn't think to check the label because the food was an unlikely source for their allergen. For example, soy is sometimes added to hamburger patties! In other cases, the food itself does not contain the allergen, but it becomes contaminated.

Cross-contact occurs when the proteins from various foods mix. Oftentimes this happens during the cooking process (for example, when a cookie sheet used to bake nut-containing cookies is then used to bake nut-free cookies without being cleaned between uses) or the serving process (for example, when the knife used to spread peanut butter is then dipped in the jelly jar).

CREATIVE COOKING

People with food allergies often make food at home to minimize their risk of having a reaction from cross-contact or mislabeled foods. Allergy-friendly cooking can be a bit of a challenge at first, but with a little creativity and some determination, you can soon whip up treats so delicious that no one will believe they're allergy-friendly!

Milk-free cooking:

Milk is one of the easiest ingredients to substitute for in baking. For a cup of milk, substitute a cup of water, fruit juice, rice milk, or soy milk.

Egg-free cooking:

Eggs are in almost every baked good recipe you'll find. They are used to hold ingredients together, to add moisture, or as a leavening agent (making the batter rise enough to cook). You can use any one of the following to replace each egg in baked goods (note that these substitutes only work for recipes with one, two, or three eggs).

- 1 tsp. baking powder, 1 T. liquid, 1 T. vinegar
- 1 tsp. yeast dissolved in 1/4 cup warm water
- 1 T. apricot puree
- 1 1/2 T. water, 1 1/2 T. oil, 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 packet gelatin, 2 T. warm water (do not mix until ready to use)

Wheat-free cooking:

Baking without wheat is often the most challenging allergy-friendly cooking. The flavor and texture of baked products is sometimes a little different without gluten (found in the protein of grains such as wheat). Combining several flours may make the finished product hold together more and taste better.

Use any of the following for a thickening agent instead of 1 T. wheat flour:

- » 1 1/2 tsp. cornstarch
- » 1 T. white or brown rice flour
- » 1 1/2 tsp. potato starch
- » 2 tsp. quick-cooking tapioca
- » 1 1/2 tsp. arrowroot starch
- » 1 1/2 tsp. sweet rice flour

Wheat-free all-purpose flour mixture:

1 cup cornstarch	2 cups soy flour
2 cups rice flour	3 cups potato starch flour

Use this mix in place of wheat flour in a recipe. Use slightly more flour mixture than the recipe calls for. Reduce oven temperature by approximately 25 degrees and bake a little longer than is called for. Store any unused mixture in the refrigerator or the soy will become strong.





HOW TO READ A LABEL

The only way to prevent a food allergy reaction is to avoid the problem food. But you can't know whether a food contains an allergen simply by looking at it.

Laws and regulations like the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act of 2004 (FALCPA) have made it easier for people with food allergies to identify problem foods and avoid them.

Managing life with a food allergy means reading packaged food labels every time you buy that food. This is true even if you have purchased the food hundreds of times. Ingredients and manufacturing processes can change without warning. Make a habit of carefully reading labels to ensure you avoid any potential allergens.

While all ingredients in a food are supposed to be listed in the ingredients list, FALCPA only covers the eight most common allergens. These are milk, egg, peanut, tree nuts, soy, wheat, fish, and crustacean shellfish.

What Should I Look For?

FALCPA-regulated allergens can be called out in one of three ways:

1. In the ingredient list, using the allergen's common name
2. Using the word "Contains" followed by the name of the major food allergen-for example, "Contains milk, wheat"
3. In the ingredient list in parentheses, when the ingredient is a less common form of the allergen- for example, "albumin (egg)"

With tree nuts, fish, and crustacean shellfish, the specific type must be listed (e.g. almond, tuna, crab). If you see your allergen featured in one of the above ways, it means the allergen is present in the food. Manufacturers must list an FALCPA-regulated allergen even if the amount is very small.

Non-FALCPA regulated allergens such as sesame and mustard may be present in a food but missing from an ingredient list if they are part of a spice or flavoring. Instead, they may be covered by a general term such as "natural flavorings". "May Contain" statements.

You may also notice other precautionary language on food labels. These include statements such as "may contain," "processed in a facility that also processes" or "made on equipment with." These warnings often follow the ingredient list.

Such advisory labeling is voluntary for manufacturers. There are no laws governing or requiring these statements-neither when to include them nor what their wording should be. They may or may not indicate if a product unintentionally contains, or has come in contact with, a specific allergen. Likewise, the absence of an advisory label does not mean that a product is safe.

Per the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), advisory food labels "should not be used as a substitute for adhering to current good manufacturing practices and must be truthful and not misleading."

Other Allergen Statements

Phrases such as "peanut-free" and "egg-free" are not regulated. Product labels can bear these phrases but be made in facilities where the allergens are present. Always contact the manufacturer if you are unsure.

More Tips for Reading Food Labels

- Familiarize yourself with your allergen and the foods it often appears in. Food allergens can appear in surprising places and go by less-common names. Knowing your allergen inside and out will improve your sleuthing skills
- If you are unsure whether a product could have come in contact with your allergen(s), call the manufacturer. Ask them about their ingredients and manufacturing practices.
- If you encounter a product that doesn't have an ingredients list, don't buy it.
- Be extra careful with imported products. Food labeling regulations vary by country. Imported items are supposed to follow FALCPA and other domestic food labeling laws, but occasionally they do not.
- A child with a food allergy can start checking food labels as soon as he or she learns to read. Practice at home and when you're shopping- with help from an adult.



For a Milk-Free Diet:

Avoid foods that contain any of these ingredients:

artificial butter flavor	hydrolyzed milk protein
butter, butter fat, butter oil	lactalbumin, lactalbumin
buttermilk	phosphate
casein	lactoglobulin
caseinates (ammonium	lactulose
caseinate,	milk (derivative, powder, protein,
calcium caseinate, magnesium	solids, malted, condensed,
caseinate, potassium caseinate,	evaporated, dry, whole, low-fat,
sodium caseinate)	milkfat, non-fat, skimmed, and
cheese	goat's milk)
cream	nougat
cottage cheese	pudding
curds	rennet casein
custard	sour cream, sour cream solids
Ghee	sour milk solids
Half & Half®	whey (in all forms including
hydrolysates (casein, milk	sweet,
protein,	delactosed, protein concentrate)
protein, whey, whey protein)	yogurt

May contain milk protein:

Chocolate flavorings (including natural and artificial)
 Lactose
 Luncheon meat, hotdogs, sausages
 High protein flour
 Margarine
 Non-dairy products
 Simplese®



For a Peanut-Free Diet:

Avoid foods that contain any of these ingredients:

Beer nuts	Nu-Nuts® flavored nuts
Cold pressed, expelled, or	Nut pieces
extruded peanut oil	Peanut
Ground nuts	Peanut butter
Mixed nuts	Peanut flour
Monkey nuts	
May contain peanut protein:	
African, Chinese, Indonesian,	Egg rolls
Thai, and Vietnamese dishes	Marzipan
Baked goods (pastries, cookies,	Natural and artificial flavorings
etc.)	Nougat
Candy	Sunflower seeds
Chili	
Chocolate (candies, candy bars)	

- Artificial nuts can be peanuts that have been deflavored and reflavored with a nut, such as pecan or walnut. Mandelona nuts are peanuts soaked in almond flavoring.
- Studies show that most allergic individuals can safely eat highly refined peanut oil (not cold pressed, expelled, or extruded peanut oil). Follow your Doctor's advice.
- Arachis oil is peanut oil.



For an Egg-Free Diet:

Avoid foods that contain any of these ingredients:

albumin	mayonnaise
egg (white, yolk, dried, powdered,	meringue
solids)	ovalbumin
egg substitutes	ovomucin
eggnog	ovomucoid
globulin	ovovitellin
livetin	Simplese®
lysozyme (used in Europe)	surimi

Note: A shiny glaze or yellow baked goods may indicate the presence of eggs. Lecithin, marshmallows, marzipan, natural and artificial flavorings, and pasta may contain eggs.



For a Soy-Free Diet:

Avoid foods that contain any of these ingredients:

Edamame	Tempeh
Hydrolyzed soy protein	Textured vegetable
Miso	protein(TVP)
Shoyu sauce	Tofu
Soy (albumin, flour, grits, nuts,	May contain soy protein:
milk, sprouts)	Flavoring (including natural and
Soya	artificial)
Soybean (granules, curd)	Vegetable broth
Soy protein (concentrate, isolate)	Vegetable gum
Soy sauce	Vegetable starch
Tamari	

Note: Studies show most soy allergic individuals may safely eat soy lecithin and soy oil that has been highly refined (not cold pressed, expeller pressed, or extruded soy bean oil). Follow your doctor's advice on these ingredients.





For a Wheat-Free Diet:

Avoid foods that contain any of these ingredients:

Bran	Hydrolyzed wheat protein
Bread crumbs	Kamut
Bulgur	Seitan
Cereal extract	Semolina
Couscous	Spelt
Cracker meal	Vital gluten
Durum, durum flour	Wheat (bran, germ, gluten, malt, starch)
Enriched flour	Whole wheat
Farina	Berries
Gluten	Whole wheat flour
Pasta	
Flour (all-purpose, enriched, graham, high gluten, high protein, pastry, soft wheat)	

May contain wheat protein:

Flavoring (including natural and artificial)
 Soy sauce
 Starch (gelatinized, modified, modified food starch, vegetable)
 Surimi
 Vegetable gum



For a Tree Nut-Free Diet:

Avoid foods that contain any of these ingredients:

Almonds	chocolate)
Brazil nuts	Nougat
Caponata	Nu-Nuts® artificial nuts
Cashews	Nut butters (i.e. cashew butter)
Chestnuts	Nut oil
Filbert/hazelnuts	Nut paste (i.e. almond paste)
Hickory nuts	Nut pieces
Macadamia nuts	Pecans (Mashuga nuts)
Marzipan/almond paste	Pesto
Nut Meal	Pine nuts (pinyon nuts)
Gianduja (a creamy mixture of chocolate and chopped toasted nuts found in premium or imported	Pistachios
	Walnuts

- Artificial nuts can be peanuts that have been deflavored and reflavored with a nut, such as pecan or walnut. Mamelona nuts are made from peanuts soaked in almond flavoring.
- Mortadella may contain pistachios.
- Filberts are also hazelnuts
- Avoid natural extracts i.e. pure almond extract, use imitation or artificial flavored extracts.
- Natural and artificial flavoring may contain tree nuts. Tree nuts have been used in many foods including barbecue sauce, cereals, crackers and ice cream.
- The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) identifies coconut as a tree nut, although it's the seed of a drupaceous fruit. Ask your doctor if you need to avoid coconut.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Food Allergy Alliance of the Mid-South

P. O. Box 342907
 Memphis, TN 38184-2907
www.faamidsouth.org

Schedule a Be A PAL Patch Workshop!

Kelley Barnett
 (901)614-2907
contact@faamidsouth.org

Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE)

www.foodallergy.org

Kids with Food Allergies

www.kidswithfoodallergies.org

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

www.aafa.org

Food Allergy Awareness Week

www.foodallergyawarenessweek.org

Teal Pumpkin Project

www.tealpumpkinproject.org

This is a council-own patch. Therefore it should be displayed on the back of the Girl Scout uniform.

All patch materials and criteria adapted from The Food Allergy Research and Education's Be a PAL: Protect a Life™ program and the Girl Scout Council of the Nation's Capital patch program. Resources and information obtained through Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) and the Food Allergy Alliance of the Mid-South (FAAM).