



Kitchen Handbook



All about Allergens

About this book

Children depend on staff in Children's Education and Care (CEC) settings to provide a safe environment, including safe food. Parents must be able to trust that their child with food allergy is given the right food.

This book is for anyone who plans, makes or serves food or supervises meals and drinks in CEC services. This includes managers, educators, cooks, chefs and volunteers.

Use this book with the National Allergy Council's [All About Allergens for CEC free online training](#)

Preventing and managing anaphylaxis in Children's Education and Care

See the National Allergy Council's [Best practice guidelines for Anaphylaxis Prevention and Management in Children's Education and Care](#) for guidance and practical resources to reduce the risk of anaphylaxis in CEC services.



Find out more at:
<https://allergyaware.org.au/childrens-education-and-care>



All about Allergens free online training courses



All about Allergens
Training for Food Service

The free, online [All about Allergens for CEC course](#) is for staff working in CEC services who plan, make and serve food or supervise mealtimes.



Find out more at:
<https://foodallergytraining.org.au/>

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Contents

What is food allergy	4
Managing food allergies in Children's Education and Care	5
What is an allergy aware CEC service?	6
Food Services in Children's Education and Care (Legislative requirements)	6
Practical considerations when making food for children with food allergies	7
Know what is in the food you make and serve	7
Know which children have food allergies and the days they attend your service	10
Planning and making food	12
Managing meals, drinks and snacks	16
Managing infant formula	19
Information about food allergens	21
Special occasions	37
What if something goes wrong? Reporting reactions to foods	40
Where to go for more information	43



Food allergy is a serious issue

Food allergy is an immune system reaction to a food.

Food allergies are common in **Australia**. They affect **1 in 10 babies** and **1 in 20 school aged children**.



Some children can have severe, life-threatening allergic reactions known as anaphylaxis.

Foods that cause an allergic reaction are called **food allergens**.



!

The only way to manage a food allergy is for the child to completely avoid the food they are allergic to.

Even a crumb or drop of food, or a sip of a drink can cause an allergic reaction.

Children can have allergies to any food

The common allergy causing foods are cow's milk, soy, egg, peanut, tree nuts, sesame seeds, wheat, fish, mollusc, crustacea (shellfish), and lupin.

Most allergic reactions to foods are caused by these foods:



Egg



Milk (Dairy)



Soy



Peanut



Crustacea



Fish



Sesame



Mollusc



Tree nuts



Wheat



Lupin

Any food can cause an allergic reaction.



All food allergies must be taken seriously.

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Food Intolerance

A food intolerance is not the same as a food allergy. A food intolerance does not involve the immune system and is not life-threatening.

Managing food allergies is everyone's responsibility

Everyone plays a role and needs to communicate about food allergies.

Parent/Carer

When they enrol, ask parents about their child's allergies and any other dietary needs.

Parents should:

- Tell the service if their child's allergies change.
- Provide a copy of their child's ASCIA Action Plan and allergy medication.



Service Manager

- Make sure all staff are aware of the risk of food allergies. This includes managers, educators, cooks, chefs and other kitchen staff.
- Make sure that only staff who are trained in food allergen management plan, order, make, serve and supervise children eating the food.
- Make sure you have a food allergy policy, and procedures for food allergen management. Audit your service to make sure the policy and procedures are followed.



Educator

- Know how to recognise and respond to allergic reactions.
- Know how to provide a safe environment for children with food allergies during meal and snack times.
- Plan safe and inclusive activities for children with food allergy.



Cook/Chef

- Know how to make and serve suitable food for children with food allergies.
- Know what is in the food they make and serve.
- Know which children in their childcare service have food allergies.
- Be able to answer questions from parents of children with food allergies about the ingredients of the food they make and serve. Other CEC staff should know how to find this information if they are asked for it.



All food allergies must be taken seriously

Use the same approach for all types of food allergies, regardless of the type of ASCIA Action Plan they have.

Parents should not be asked to sign disclaimers or waivers about possible exposure to food allergens while their child is at a CEC service.

Food allergy aware approach for CEC Services

A food **allergy aware** approach is recommended rather than banning foods that children in the CEC service are allergic to.

Banning foods and using terms such as 'nut free' is not an effective way to manage food allergies in CEC services.

Being food **allergy aware** means doing many things to lower the chance of a child having food or drink they are allergic to.

Good nutrition

- Young children need good nutrition for their growth and development.
- Children in long day care usually eat and drink around half of their daily nutritional requirements when they are in care.
- Children with food allergy are more likely to develop feeding problems, especially if they eat the food they are allergic to. They may have problems with certain textures, very picky eating or refuse food.
- The attitudes of educators towards food and mealtimes can influence how children feel about food and mealtimes as they get older. Educators can positively influence feeding behaviours!

- CEC services are audited by local government Authorised Officers. You can find out more about your legal requirements for food safety including food allergies from your local government authority or state food safety regulator.

<https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/contact/food-regulatory-agencies>



Food safety for CEC services

- Food safety laws in Australia are set by the [Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code](#) and the [Food Acts](#) in each state or territory.
- CEC services must comply with the requirements for safe and nutritious food and drink, set by the [National Quality Framework](#) and their state or territory regulator.
- CEC services must have a food safety supervisor on site. It is best practice to have more than one trained food safety supervisor on staff, so there is always someone with the skills and knowledge on site.



Food safety for food allergy

- Food allergies are an important food safety issue in CEC services.
- It is recommended that all staff involved in planning, ordering, making, serving and supervising meals and snacks, complete the free [All about Allergens for CEC online training](#).
- The Food Standards Code states that you must provide the right information about allergens in the food and drinks that are served to the children, when parents ask.
- You must not give a child with food allergy a meal, snack or drink that contains their food allergen.
- Food must be *made* in a way that reduces the risk of the food accidentally having the child's allergen in it.
- Food must be *served* in a way that makes sure the right food is given to the right child.
- Food and drink spills should be cleaned up quickly to reduce the chance that a child with food allergy will have contact with a food they are allergic to.
- Allergic reactions to food or drinks must be reported.



Food Services in Children's Education and Care must comply with Australian food safety standards and the National Quality Framework.



Planning and making food for children with food allergies



Planning your menu

1 Know the ingredients in the foods you make and serve

Children with food allergies must not be served foods that contain their allergen as an ingredient. Information about how to understand allergens on food labels is included on page 9.

Keep a record of what is in the food and drinks served in your service using standard recipes and a food allergen menu matrix. This is important for children with food allergies.

Keep the food allergen menu matrix up to date.

Standard recipes

- Standard recipes are recipes that everyone follows exactly. No changes. No additions.
- Using standard recipes means that the food will have the same ingredients every time it is served.
- Do not use different brands if you are not sure what the replacement product contains.
- Do not add extra ingredients to a recipe.
- Standard recipes include the number of serves they make, which helps with budgeting.
- Standard recipes help you to keep your food allergen menu matrix up to date.

Download a [standard recipe template](#) to use in your service here:



Know which allergens are in the food products you use

- Only accept foods supplied with ingredients and allergens listed on a food label. If the food does not have a label (for example bread from a bakery) make sure you have an up-to-date Product Information Form (PIF) or specification that lists ingredients and allergens. This comes from the food supplier.
- Check all ingredients for allergens, including sauces, spices, garnishes, spreads, oils and dressings.
- Check for precautionary allergen labelling statements ('may be present' or 'may contain'). These foods should not be served to children with those allergies.
- Food manufacturers can change their ingredients or the way the food is processed at any time. Check labels and Product Information Forms for allergens **every time** you buy a food and when a food delivery is received.
- If you accept a replacement product from your supplier (for example another brand), check the food label or Product Information Form for allergens and update the food allergen menu matrix if needed.
- If a child is allergic to a food that is not a common allergen, check the ingredient list on the label or Product Information Form, and recipes.

Food allergen menu matrix

- The food allergen menu matrix is a chart that lists all the menu items and shows which common food allergens are ingredients or listed in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may contain') in those menu items.
- The food allergen menu matrix should include all food and drinks made on-site as well as food prepared off-site (such as commercially prepared food and drinks).

All staff who make or serve food for children with food allergy should know where to find the food allergen menu matrix.

Menu item	Time issue												Gluten containing cereals							
	Wheat	Egg	Milk	Casein	Mustard	Sesame	Crustacean	Soya	Almonds	Walnuts	Pecans	Hazelnuts	Coconut	Peanut	Tree nut	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Rice	Buckwheat
Caesar salad	C	C	C					C	YML							C	C	C		
Tuna salad with tuna	C	C	C						YML	C						C	C	C		
Pumpkin risotto	C															C				
Beef stir fry						C		C	C		C									
Steak sandwich	C	C						YML									C	C	C	
Chicken burger	C	C				C											C	C		
Garden salad																				
Vegetable coconut curry	C																			
Frittata	C	C																		
Pad Thai	C	C						C	C							C		C	C	
Apple crumble	C		YML					YML		C	YML	YML	YML	YML	YML	YML	YML	C	C	C
Spaghetti bolognese	C	YML						YML		C	YML	YML	YML	YML	YML	YML	YML	C	C	C

Completed by:

Date:

Signature:

Page 1 of 1

Download a food allergen menu matrix template to use in your service.



If children in your service are allergic to foods not listed in the template, you can add a new column.

Case study A different bread is delivered

The cook at Happy Smiles CEC service usually buys **plain bakery bread**.

INGREDIENTS:

Wholemeal **wheat** flour, water, **wheat** flour (vitamins (thiamin, folic acid)), yeast, **wheat** gluten, vegetable oils (canola, palm), iodised salt, malted **barley** flour, fermented **wheat** flour, processing aid (**wheat**).

CONTAINS: gluten, wheat

Today she receives **soft wholemeal bread** instead.

INGREDIENTS:

Wholemeal **wheat** flour, water, **wheat** fibre, yeast, modified tapioca starch (1413), **wheat** gluten, canola oil, vinegar, iodised salt, **soy** flour, cultured **wheat** flour, vegetable emulsifiers (471, 472e, 481), vitamins (vitamin E, thiamin, niacin, vitamin B6, folic acid), minerals (iron, zinc), processing aids (**wheat**).

CONTAINS: **gluten, soy, wheat**

MAY CONTAIN: sesame

She reads the ingredients label, and sees that the soft wholemeal bread contains wheat, gluten and soy. It has precautionary allergen labelling ('may contain') for sesame.

She updates the food allergen matrix because the soft wholemeal bread is different to the usual bread **AND** checks to see if there are any children with soy or sesame seed allergies attending the CEC service on that day.

Understanding food labels

Staff who make decisions about ingredients that are used must know how to read food labels for food allergens.

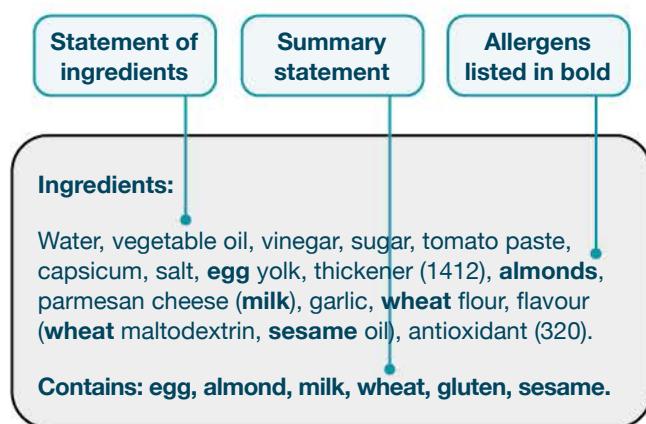
If a product has a label, the Food Standards Code requires the following common food allergens to be shown on a package if they are an ingredient of the food:



Sulphites in concentrations of 10mg/kg or more must also be shown on food labels of packaged foods.

This law also applies to imported products.

This is an example of how a food label should look.



Source: 2024 Food Industry Guide to Allergen Management and Labelling for Australia and New Zealand.

Food safety recalls

- Subscribe to [food safety recalls](#) to find out about products recalled due to undeclared allergens.
- Foods that have been recalled should not be used in your menu.



Precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present' or 'may contain')

- Precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present' or 'may contain') is used to explain that a food may have been contaminated with an allergen when growing, storing, transporting, making or packing the food.
- It is recommended that foods with precautionary allergen labelling statements are not served to children with an allergy to those foods. For example, a product labelled 'may be present: peanut, tree nuts' should not be given to a child with a peanut or tree nut allergy.

Learn more about precautionary allergen labelling on this [webpage](#).



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Know which children with food allergy will be present for each meal and snack time

To plan meals and snacks across your menu cycle you need to know which food allergies and other special diets you are catering for, and the days that children with food allergies and other dietary needs are attending.

Record of food allergy and special dietary needs

- A record of food allergy and special dietary needs is filled out by the parents and a staff member when children are enrolled.
- This record states which foods the child is allergic to and any other dietary needs.
- For children with food allergies this form should include the name of suitable foods that are used at home.
- The form must be updated if the child's food allergies change.

Download a [Record of food allergy and special dietary needs template](#) to use in your service.



<p>National Allergy Council Record of Food Allergy and Special Dietary Needs for Children's Education and Care Services [Insert Name of Child in service's Education and Care Services]</p> <p>Child's name: _____ Date of birth: _____ Parent/Carer's name: _____ Address: _____ Phone no: _____ Mobile: _____</p> <p>Emergency contact information:</p> <p>1. What foods is your child allergic to?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cow's milk / dairy <input type="checkbox"/> Egg <input type="checkbox"/> Fish <input type="checkbox"/> Peanut <input type="checkbox"/> Tree nuts <input type="checkbox"/> Wheat <input type="checkbox"/> Soya <input type="checkbox"/> Sesame <input type="checkbox"/> Glutens <input type="checkbox"/> Lactose <input type="checkbox"/> Sulphites <input type="checkbox"/> Sulphur dioxide <input type="checkbox"/> Yeast <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other food allergies: _____</p> <p>2. What replacements do you child eat? (in products/reviews)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Milk substitutes / special formula: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Soya formula / bread / crackers / other grains: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Egg replacer: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>3. Who will provide meals, snacks and drinks for your child in their care?</p> <p>Inside: <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> CEC service Outside: <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> CEC service Outside: <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> CEC service</p> <p>4. Who will provide food for your child for special activities?</p> <p>For parties, school assemblies and school meetings: <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> CEC service</p> <p>5. Emergency contact information:</p> <p>Emergency contact information:</p> <p>Parent/Carer: _____ Date: _____ CEC Staff Member: _____ Name: _____ Position: _____</p>	<p>National Allergy Council Record of Food Allergy and Special Dietary Needs for Children's Education and Care Services [Insert Name of Child in service's Education and Care Services]</p> <p>Child's name: _____ Date of birth: _____ Parent/Carer's name: _____ Address: _____ Phone no: _____ Mobile: _____</p> <p>Emergency contact information:</p> <p>1. Does your child have any other special dietary needs?</p> <p>(e.g. food intolerances, vegetarians, cultural dietary restrictions/modified)</p> <p>2. Who will provide meals, snacks and drinks for your child in their care?</p> <p>Inside: <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> CEC service Outside: <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> CEC service Outside: <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> CEC service</p> <p>3. Who will provide food for your child for special activities?</p> <p>For parties, school assemblies and school meetings: <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> CEC service</p> <p>4. Emergency contact information:</p> <p>Emergency contact information:</p> <p>Parent/Carer: _____ Date: _____ CEC Staff Member: _____ Name: _____ Position: _____</p>
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Daily attendance sheet

- A daily attendance sheet lists the name of each child that is attending on that day and which meals and snacks they will be present for.
- It shows which children have food allergies and any other special dietary needs.

Download a [daily attendance sheet template](#) to use in your service.



Daily Attendance Sheet				
Week 1 beginning 28 th May – Children with Allergies and Special Diets				
Day	Room	Child's Name	Child's special dietary need	Comments or notes on menu options
Monday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg / Kiwi fruit allergy	Serve pasta bolognese (try to choose)
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut allergy	Wheat free pasta for bolognese and servie first
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian	Lunch independent, can have choices
Tuesday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy	Serve sandwich rolls (first before adding milk, sandwiches on rolls)
	Green	Kim Ng	Egg / peanut / sesame allergy	Start here this week
	Green	Marco Smith	Vegetarian	Meal is vegetarian so ok
Wednesday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy	No sandwich on the kitten rolls
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut allergy	Chicken rolls is wheat free
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian	French version of rolls
Thursday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy	Start a batch of home baked rolls with egg replacer and wheat free flour first (for Jessie and Ethan)
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut allergy	Start a batch of home baked rolls with egg replacer and wheat free flour first (for Jessie and Ethan)
	Green	Kim Ng	Egg / peanut / sesame allergy	Lunch sandwich rolls no milk or egg
Friday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy	Lunch sandwich rolls no milk or egg
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut allergy	Lunch sandwich rolls no milk or egg
	Green	Kim Ng	Egg / peanut / sesame allergy	Start here this week
				Vegetarian pizza - has egg to make in separate area, away from Jessie's food

Case study

Using the daily attendance sheet

The Happy Smiles CEC service has received another bread order. Instead of their usual order of plain bakery bread, today the kitchen has received **high fibre white bread**.

INGREDIENTS:

Wheat flour (vitamins (thiamin, folic acid)), water, yeast, vegetable oils (palm, canola), iodised salt, yellow **pea flour**, **wheat** gluten, fermented **wheat** flour, processing aid (**wheat**).

CONTAINS: **gluten, wheat**

MAY CONTAIN: egg, lupin, milk, sesame, soy, peanuts, tree nuts

Daily Attendance Sheet
Week 1 beginning 28th May – Children with Allergies and Special Diets

Day	Room	Child's Name	Child's special diet
Monday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / pea allergy
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian
Tuesday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy
	Green	Kim Ng	Egg / peanut allergy
	Green	Marco Smith	Vegetarian
Wednesday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Soy / peanut / pea allergy
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian
Thursday (wk 1)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut allergy
	Green	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy
Friday (wk 1)	Blue	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut allergy
	Orange	Kim Ng	Egg / peanut / sesame allergy
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian

Comments or notes on menu:
Tofu version of risotto
Make a batch of tuna flour first (for Jessie and Ethan)
Make a batch of tuna flour first (for Jessie and Ethan)
Lamb pilaf has no milk
Not here this week
Vegetarian pilaf - Jessie's food

The cook reads the label and sees that the bread contains pea flour as an ingredient. It also has precautionary allergen labelling ('may contain') to egg, lupin, milk, sesame, soy, peanuts and tree nuts.

The cook checks the **daily attendance sheet**, and notices that there is a child with soy, peanut and pea allergies in the service on that day. Another child has cow's milk and egg allergies.

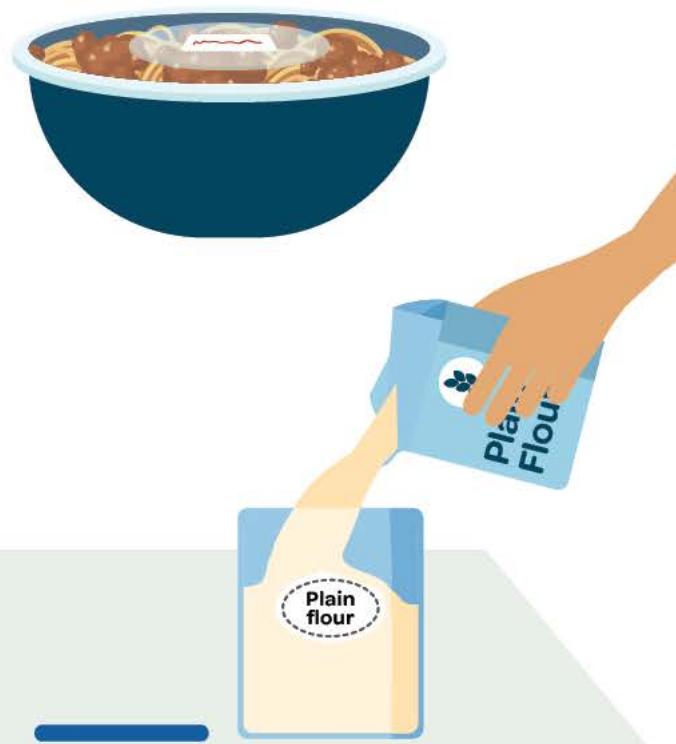
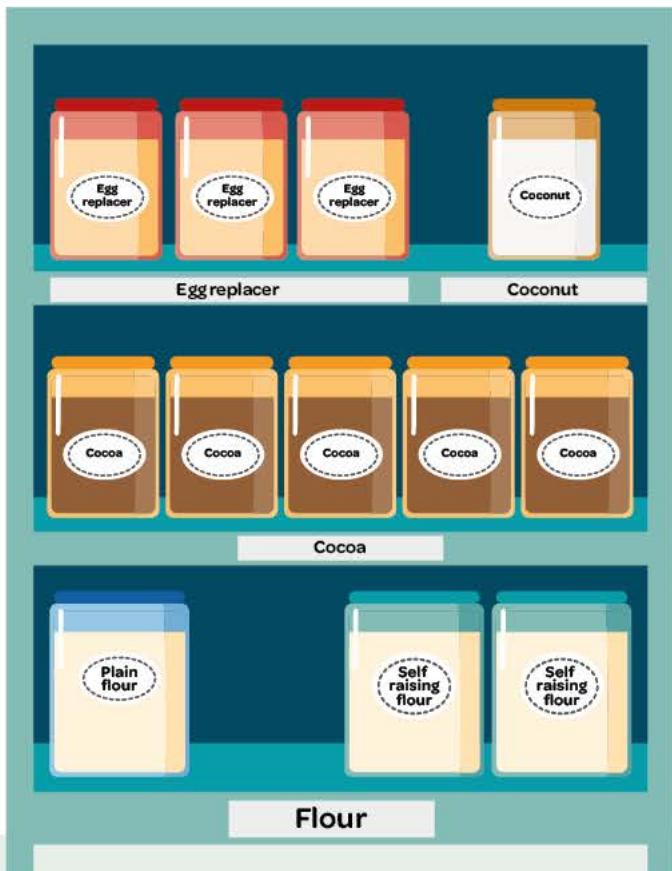
These children will need a different bread. The cook decides to use some frozen plain bakery bread without precautionary allergen labelling ('may contain') to these allergens.

3 Planning and making food for children with food allergies

Storing foods

- Storing food the right way will help avoid cross contamination with allergens from other foods.
- Keep storage areas clean and tidy.
- Clean up spills straight away.
- Throw out any food that is contaminated with another food from a spill.

- Label storage areas and all food containers so that foods are always placed in the correct position.
- **Store foods with common food allergens separately in sealed labelled containers.**
- Store high risk items, such as flour, in separate sealed containers on lower shelves to prevent spills onto other items.
- When transferring foods from the original packaging into another container, take care not to contaminate other foods or containers. Label the container with the food and its ingredients.
- Food items for children with food allergy should be covered or wrapped, labelled and stored separately.



About cross contamination

Cross contamination (also called cross contact) happens when a food that does not contain an allergen is contaminated with a food allergen. This can happen when making, storing and serving food and drinks.

Cross contamination is a problem because very small amounts of a food or drink (a crumb or a drop) can cause an allergic reaction.

Examples of cross contamination of food allergens from one food to another:

- Making a cheese sandwich, then using the same cutting board and knife to make a ham sandwich will contaminate the ham sandwich with cheese (cow's milk).
- Using a mixer to make muffins with egg, then making muffins without egg and not washing the mixer properly in between will contaminate the second muffin mix with egg.
- Using the same temperature probe to check a meal that contains cow's milk, then using it to check a milk free meal will contaminate the second meal with cow's milk.
- Sprinkling cheese on a pasta dish then picking the cheese off will contaminate the meal with cow's milk.



Cleaning – clean space, clean hands, clean equipment

Clean space

- Cleaning with detergent and water, using a clean cloth removes food allergens.
- Sanitising benchtops and hands kills germs but does not remove food allergens.
- Wash benches, utensils, equipment and hands well
 - Before making food
 - In between food handling tasks
 - Before and after handling a food allergen

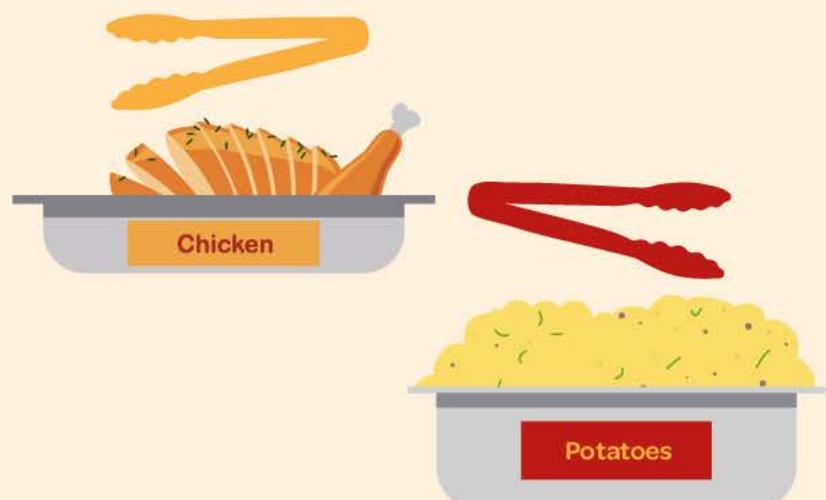
Clean hands

- Wash your hands with soap and warm running water, then dry them on a paper towel between tasks and after handling an allergen.
- Do not dry or wipe your hands on a tea towel. Tea towels can be contaminated with food allergens.
- If you use gloves, put on new gloves when making or serving food for children with food allergy.
- Change your gloves between different food preparation tasks.
- Washing hands with soap and warm running water in between tasks is more effective than wearing gloves.
- Use latex free gloves when making food for children with latex allergy.



Clean equipment

- Use clean equipment and utensils every time you make a meal for children with food allergies.
- Use separate utensils for different foods, such as a different pair of tongs for two different meal items.
- Have separate equipment for common allergens (such as a separate toaster for wheat free or gluten free bread).
- Blenders and whisks can be difficult to clean – check carefully for any food left after cleaning and consider separate equipment for making food allergy meals.
- Make sure plates and cutlery are thoroughly washed in hot soapy water or a dishwasher. Check plates and cutlery are clean before serving meals.



Food preparation

- Only staff trained in food allergen management should make food and drinks for children with food allergy.
- Clean the workspace and wash your hands well before starting.
- Check ingredients of all food products for allergens in case anything has changed.
- Follow standard recipes.
- Separate space:** If you can, make meals for children with food allergy in a separate area.
- Separate time:** If possible, make foods for children with food allergy first.
- Be aware that a food that is safe for a child with one food allergy may not be safe for a child with a different food allergy. For example, a child might be allergic to cow's milk but not egg, and another child might be allergic to egg but tolerate cow's milk. Plan the order that you make food allergy meals.
- Cover the meal once it is made, and label it with the child's name and their allergy.

What should I do if a meal is accidentally cross contaminated with an allergen?

Prepare a fresh meal!

Never give a food that is cross contaminated with an allergen to a child with food allergy.

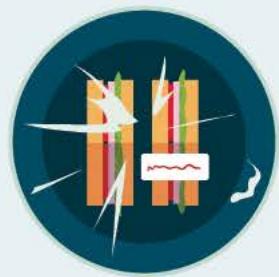
Have a plan (such as a meal in a freezer labelled with the child's name) in case their meal is dropped or contaminated with an allergen.

Using temperature probes and food thermometers

- When checking food temperatures, check the meals for the children with food allergies first.
- Clean the temperature probe or food thermometer thoroughly with detergent and water between checking each dish.



Right food to right child



Meal delivery

- The cook or chef should hand over meals for children with food allergy first to a staff member who knows the child.
- Sign the **Meal sign off form for allergies and special dietary needs** for the child with food allergy when the meal is handed over to the staff or educators who are supervising the meal.
- Meals and drinks for children with food allergy must be labelled with the child's name and their allergy.
- Have a clear way of identifying meals for children with food allergy – for example, a coloured plate, or a different shaped plate.



Meal sign off form for allergies and special dietary needs

- This form is used to sign off when meals for allergies and other special dietary needs are handed over from the kitchen or food service to the staff serving and supervising meals.
- The staff supervising the meal sign the form again once they have served the meal to the child.

Download a [Meal sign off form](#) for allergies and special dietary needs to use in your service.



Serving meals

- Children with food allergy should only be supervised by staff who know them well and who have completed All about Allergens CEC online training and ASCIA Anaphylaxis e-training for CEC.
- **Serve children with food allergy first**, before serving other children.
- **Two staff members** should check and sign off that the right meal is given to the right child with food allergy.
- Use the **Meal sign off form for allergies and special dietary needs** to confirm that the right meal is given to the right child.
- Children with food allergy should not eat from shared platters, unless all the food on the platter and the other food served at that meal or snack time does not contain their food allergen and has been prepared appropriately.



Supervise meals, snacks and drinks

- Children must **always** be supervised when eating and drinking.
- Children with food allergy should be supervised by a staff member who knows them well.
- Children and staff must wash their hands before eating, and when they have finished eating.
- Make sure children with food allergy are not exposed to their food allergen by food from other children.
- Children must not share food.
- Clean up spills straight away.



Managing 'progressive' or different mealtimes

- When children are not all eating at the same time, plan carefully to make sure children with food allergies are given the right meal when it is their turn to eat.
- Clean the eating space (table and chairs) before a child with food allergy eats.
- Encourage children with food allergies to eat during the first meal sitting.
- When children with food allergies have finished their meal, there should be a formal hand over from the staff member supervising the meal to the child's educator. This is because of the risk of a delayed reaction.

Cleaning up spills

- Clean up spills straight away. This helps reduce the risk of a child with food allergy coming into contact with their allergen.
- Have a spill kit nearby. A spill kit has all the things needed to clean up – a bucket, a sponge, wipes, detergent spray and gloves.

Learn more about spill kits [here](#).



Managing drinks for children with food allergy

Supervise children when they are drinking so they only drink from their own water bottle or cup.

Cups and water bottles can become contaminated with a food allergen if another child drinks from them.

Drinks can contain food allergens.

Water bottles

- Each child's water bottle must be **clearly labelled** with their name and a symbol that they can recognise.
- Store water bottles belonging to children with food allergy **separately**, for example with their bag.



Cups

- Give children with food allergies **different coloured cups labelled with their name**.
- Pour and serve milk drinks for the children with milk allergy **first**.

- **Two staff members** should check that the right milk is given to the right child.

Learn more about managing drinks for children with food allergy in this short [video](#).



Managing infant formula



Regular infant formula contains cow's milk protein. Babies with cow's milk allergy cannot have any food or drink containing cow's milk protein.

Babies with cow's milk allergy will drink breast milk or a special formula that does not contain cow's milk.

- It is important that children with allergies are given the right formula and that there is no contamination of their formula when it is made up.
- All formula must be labelled with the child's name and the name of the formula.
- Before feeding, two staff members should check that the right formula is given to the right child.
- Make sure the child's formula is included in their allergy and special dietary information.
- Use the [form for infant formula and expressed breast milk](#) to help staff check and document that the right formula is made and given to the right child.



Long day care services manage infant formula in different ways

Option 1. Parents provide formula that has already been made up at home:

- The bottles must be labelled with the child's name and the name of the formula and the date.
- Store the formula in a section in the fridge for children with milk allergy.

Option 2. Formula is made up by the service using formula powder the parents have measured out into a container:

- The container must be labelled with the child's name and the name of the formula.
- Bottles must be labelled with the child's name and the name of the formula. Parents might bring bottles with the right amount of water in them or write on the bottle or container how much water is needed in the bottle.
- Use the exact amount of powder from the container added to the correct amount of cool, boiled water.

Option 3. Formula is made up by the service from a tin of formula that parents provide to the service:

- If parents provide a tin of formula, it is best that it is an unopened tin.
- The tin must be labelled with the child's name on the lid and the side of the can.
- Formula tins for children with cow's milk allergy must be stored away from other types of infant formula.



If you are making formula from a tin:

- Use the scoop from the tin – NEVER use a scoop from a different tin.
- Follow the instructions on the tin for how many scoops and how much water to use or use the recipe that is provided by the parents.
- Add the correct amount of cool, boiled water to the bottle.
- Add the correct number of scoops.
- Shake the bottle to mix.

Storing formula in the fridge

- If the formula or expressed breast milk is not being given to the child straight away, label it with the child's name and the name of the formula and store it in the fridge.
- Label a place in the fridge where different types of formula or expressed breast milk should be stored to prevent cross contamination from other formula or expressed milk.
- Different formula should be kept separate to each other. For example, you may have separate sections or tubs for storing expressed breast milk, regular formula, soy formula, rice formula, and specialised infant formula which does not contain cow's milk protein.
- Formula and expressed breast milk for cow's milk allergy should be kept on a shelf above other formula to prevent cross contamination from spills or leaking bottles.

Preventing cross contamination when making infant formula

- Staff making up formula should not be disturbed to reduce the chance of making mistakes.
- Make formula for children with food allergies first.
- Make one type of formula at a time.
- Make sure you have a clear space to make formula.
- Clean the bench well using detergent and water.
- Wash your hands well with soap and water.
- Make sure you have clean bottles and equipment.
- Check the child's name and the formula name are correct.
- Repeat this process for the next type of formula.
- Label the bottle with the child's name and the name of the formula, and the date you are making it.
- Some services add a red sticker to formula for children with allergy as a way of alerting staff that it is for a child with allergy.
- Two staff should check the right formula is in the right bottle labelled with the child's name and their formula.

Before making up another type of formula:

- Clean the space and equipment before making different formula and follow the same process.



Information about food allergens



Cow's milk allergy



Cow's milk is an important food for young children. For menu planning guidance for children with cow's milk allergy attending care, [see this fact sheet](#).



Children with cow's milk allergy must avoid cow's milk, sheep milk, goat milk, A2 milk and lactose free milk, and all foods made with these milks.

Children with cow's milk allergy may need cow's milk free infant formula. For information about managing infant formula for children with food allergy, see page 19.

Foods that usually contain cow's milk

- Dairy foods such as milk, butter, cheese, ghee, yoghurt, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, ice cream, A2 dairy foods and lactose free dairy foods.
- Margarine.
- Biscuits, cakes and pastries.
- Crumbed foods.

Download this [resource](#) from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia for a list of foods that contain cow's milk.



Check for milk in the statement of ingredients

INGREDIENTS: Wheat flour, sugar, vegetable oil (antioxidant 307 from soy), condensed **milk** (1.8%), salt, **wheat** starch, baking powder, arrowroot flour.

CONTAINS: **Milk**, **wheat**, soy, gluten.

Reading labels for cow's milk allergy

Check for milk in the summary ('contains') statement

INGREDIENTS: Wheat flour, vegetable oil, antioxidant 319, **wheat** gluten, salt.

CONTAINS: Wheat, gluten.

MAY BE PRESENT: **Milk**, soy.

Check for milk in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present') statement

Cooking without cow's milk

To help you change recipes for children with cow's milk allergy, see the National Allergy Council ingredient substitution [tool](#) and [this fact sheet](#).



Soy milk has similar nutrition to cow's milk and is the best milk replacement for children, if it is tolerated. Oat, rice and nut based milks are low in protein and fat. Check all milk replacements for other allergens the child is allergic to.



Cow's milk allergy



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Baked Milk and Medical allergy treatment programs for cow's milk allergy

NOTE: Children who are allergic to cow's milk should strictly avoid all forms of cow's milk when attending a CEC service. Children who tolerate milk baked into biscuits, muffins or cakes, or small amounts of milk as part of a medical allergy treatment program, should only be given those foods at home.

Cow's milk can be in foods you do not expect

- Margarine.
- Some coconut products (such as coconut drinks, coconut powder, milks and creams).
- Processed meats such as ham.
- Plant based (vegan) cheese can contain traces of cow's milk.

- Sauces and mayonnaise.
- Dark chocolate usually contains cow's milk through cross contamination.
- Tubes of herbs.
- Foods labelled 'dairy-free' and 'vegan' must be checked. Never assume that a product labelled 'dairy free' or 'vegan' is suitable for children with cow's milk allergy.

Always check the ingredients list and any precautionary allergen labelling ('may contain') statements for cow's milk.



Mistakes to avoid

- Giving the wrong milk (lactose free milk, goat milk or A2 milk).
- A child with milk allergy accidentally consumes a splash or a spill of milk or a piece of grated cheese that has been dropped.

Cow's milk allergy



The difference between milk allergy and lactose intolerance

Milk allergy

Milk allergy is caused by the **immune system** reacting to the protein in milk. Allergic reactions to cow's milk can be life-threatening.

Children with cow's milk allergy must avoid all dairy foods.

This includes milk, butter, ice cream, cream and cheese. They must also avoid A2 milk, lactose free milk and other animal milks, including goat's milk and sheep's milk.



Lactose intolerance

Lactose is a type of sugar in milk. Children with lactose intolerance feel sick when they have dairy foods with lactose because they cannot digest the lactose. Lactose intolerance is not life-threatening. Lactose free products have had the **lactose sugar taken out**.

Lactose free products still contain milk protein, so **children with milk allergy must not eat lactose free dairy products**.



This [animation](#) explains the difference between milk allergy and lactose intolerance.



Soy allergy

Children with soy allergy must avoid all soy in their diets.

For menu planning guidance for children with soy allergy attending care, see this [fact sheet](#).

Children with soy allergy may need a soy free infant formula. For information about managing infant formula for children with food allergy, see page 19.



Foods that usually contain soy

- Soy milk, soy yoghurt, soy cheese
- Soy sauce
- Tofu
- Soy beans, and edamame
- Bread
- Sauces and dips

Download this [resource](#) from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia for a list of foods that contain soy.



Check for soy in the statement of ingredients

Reading labels for soy allergy

INGREDIENTS: Wholemeal **wheat** flour (45%), water, **wheat** flour, yeast, **wheat** gluten, vinegar, iodised salt, canola oil, **soya** flour, vegetable emulsifiers (472, 481), vitamins (thiamin, folic acid), processing aid (**wheat**).

CONTAINS: **Soy**, gluten, wheat.

INGREDIENTS: **Wheat** flour, sourdough culture (water, **rye** flour), wholemeal **wheat** flour, iodised salt, yeast.

CONTAINS: Wheat, gluten.

MAY BE PRESENT: **Soy**, sesame, egg.

Check for soy in the summary ('contains' statement)

Check for soy in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present' statement)

Cooking without soy

To help you change recipes for children with soy allergy, see the [National Allergy Council ingredient substitution tool](#) and [this fact sheet](#).



Mistakes to avoid

- Forgetting to ask parents which milk substitute their child usually drinks.
- Using ordinary bread – soy flour is often an ingredient in bread.



Egg allergy

For menu planning guidance for children with egg allergy attending care, see this [fact sheet](#).



Children who tolerate egg baked into muffins or cakes or small amounts of egg as part of a medical allergy treatment program should only be given these foods at home because of the risk of reactions.



Foods that usually contain egg

- Eggs – poached, boiled, fried, scrambled, omelettes
- Quiche, egg slice, frittata, egg and bacon pie
- Cakes, biscuits
- Pancakes, pikelets
- Mayonnaise

Download this [resource](#) from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia for a list of foods that contain egg.



Check for egg in the statement of ingredients

Reading labels for egg allergy

INGREDIENTS: Water, **wheat** flour, sugar, canola oil, non fat **milk** solids, **wheat** starch, whole **egg** powder, raising agent (500), salt, natural flavouring, colour (161b), vitamins (thiamine, folic acid).

CONTAINS: Milk, **egg**, **wheat**, **gluten**.

INGREDIENTS: **Wheat** flour, sourdough culture (water, **rye** flour), wholemeal **wheat** flour, iodised salt, yeast.

CONTAINS: Wheat, gluten.

MAY BE PRESENT: Soy, **egg**, **sesame**.

Check for egg in the summary ('contains' statement)

Check for egg in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present' statement)

Cooking without egg

To help you change recipes for children with egg allergy, see the [National Allergy Council ingredient substitution tool](#) and [this fact sheet](#).



Mistakes to avoid

- Egg can be used as a glaze on bread.
- Egg is an ingredient in some ice creams.
- 'Vegan' products. Never assume that a product labelled 'vegan' is suitable for children with egg allergy.
- Egg is sometimes an ingredient in grated parmesan cheese!

Egg allergy



Always check the ingredients list and any precautionary allergen labelling ('may contain') statements for egg.

Case study About baked egg and baked milk

The cook at Happy Smiles CEC service is asked to provide muffins containing baked egg for a child with egg allergy who can tolerate baked egg.

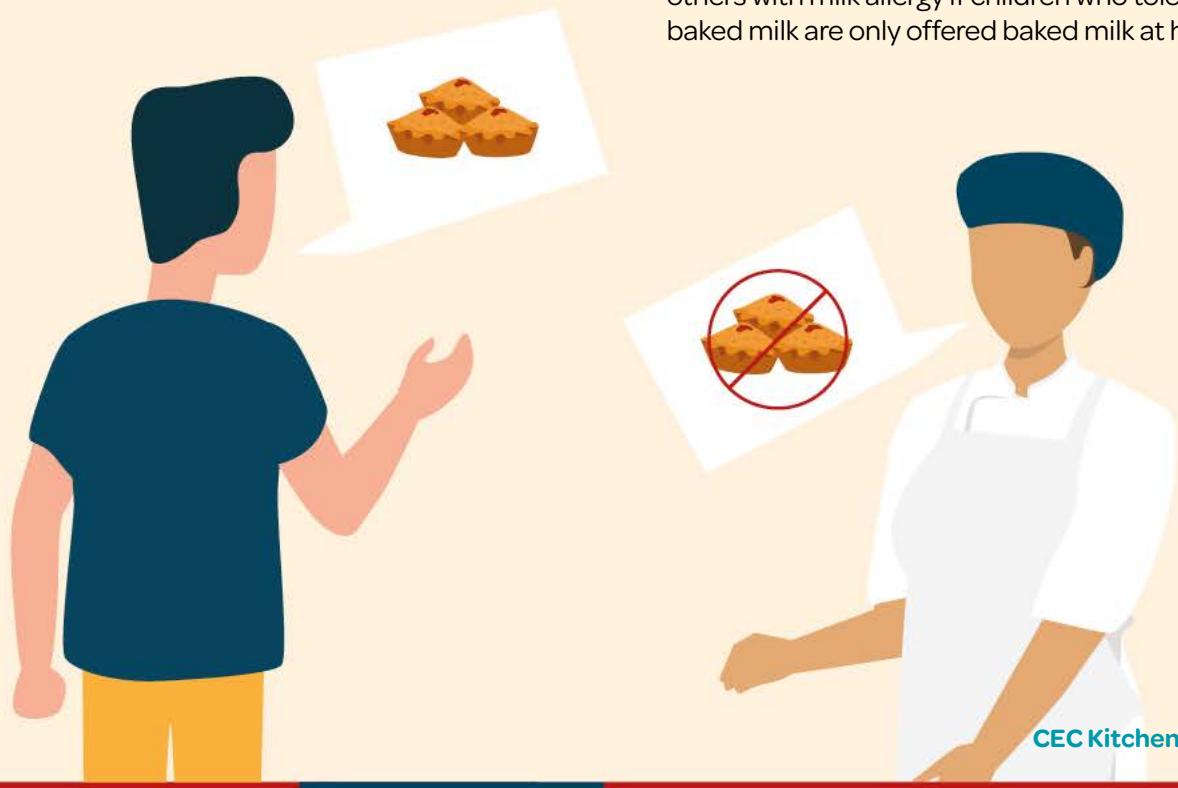
What is happening here?

Many children with egg allergy outgrow their allergy as they get older. Children with egg allergy may tolerate baked egg in a muffin or cake *before* they can eat egg that is less well cooked (such as scrambled egg). The decision to start offering a child with egg allergy baked egg is made by their allergy doctor.

Should CEC services offer baked egg to children in care?

It is safest for the child who tolerates baked egg, and the other children with egg allergy, if children who tolerate baked egg are only offered baked egg at home. There is a risk that a child might react to a food containing baked egg if it is not cooked enough, or if they are unwell.

Some children with cow's milk allergy also tolerate baked cow's milk if they are beginning to outgrow their milk allergy. It is safest for the child and the others with milk allergy if children who tolerate baked milk are only offered baked milk at home.



Wheat allergy



Children with wheat allergy must avoid all wheat in their diets.

Wheat is a nutritious food for children. For menu planning guidance for children with wheat allergy attending care, see this [fact sheet](#).



Foods that usually contain wheat

- Bread, breakfast cereals
- Cakes, sweet biscuits and crackers
- Pasta, semolina, couscous
- Processed meat

Download this [resource](#) from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia for a list of foods that contain wheat.



Check for wheat in the statement of ingredients

Reading labels for wheat allergy

INGREDIENTS: Wheat bran (95%), sugar, barley malt extract, maltodextrin (wheat), salt, minerals (iron, zinc oxide), vitamins (niacin, riboflavin, folate).

CONTAINS: Wheat, gluten.

INGREDIENTS: Oats (29%), oat flour, honey, coconut, butter (milk), currants, sultanas, almonds, baking soda.

CONTAINS: Milk, almonds, gluten.

MAY BE PRESENT: Wheat.

Check for wheat in the summary ('contains' statement)

Check for wheat in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present' statement)

Cooking without wheat

To help you change recipes for children with wheat allergy, see the [National Allergy Council ingredient substitution tool](#) and [this fact sheet](#).



Mistakes to avoid

- Using the same toaster for ordinary bread and wheat free bread will contaminate the wheat free bread with wheat. Use a separate toaster for wheat free or gluten free bread.
- The wrong bread is used, such as spelt bread instead of wheat free bread.
- A child with wheat allergy accidentally eats wheat crumbs after another child has eaten wheat.
- Using wheat based cornflour.

What is the difference between wheat allergy and coeliac disease?

To understand the difference between wheat allergy and coeliac disease, watch this short [video](#).



Wheat allergy

A child, or children with wheat allergy can have a serious life-threatening allergic reaction to any of the proteins in wheat.



Children with wheat allergy must avoid wheat and any foods containing wheat. They may be able to eat other cereals that contain gluten, such as rye, barley and oats if they are not allergic to them.

If a child has a wheat allergy, check for **all** wheat ingredients on a food label, even foods that are labelled "gluten-free".

You should also check if they are allergic to any other grains.

When making food for someone with wheat allergy, be careful not to contaminate their food with wheat from other foods.

Wheat allergy can be immediately life-threatening.

Children with a wheat allergy must avoid all foods, ingredients and products containing wheat.



CARBOHYDRATES	vvv	v
DIETARY FIBRE	vvv	v
SODIUM	vvv	v

Ingredients: rice flakes, quinoa flakes, sun raisins, sunflower seeds, **almonds**, pepita, golden syrup, maltodextrin (**wheat**), dnn

Contains: **almonds, wheat**.

Gluten free

Coeliac disease



Coeliac disease

Coeliac disease is a lifelong autoimmune condition. It is **not** a food allergy.

Children with coeliac disease must avoid foods that contain gluten from any grain. Oats contain a gluten-like protein that affects some people with coeliac disease.



If a child with coeliac disease eats gluten, it will not cause a life-threatening reaction. Eating gluten will make them feel very unwell and can cause serious long-term health problems.

Children with coeliac disease must not be given foods containing gluten.

When making food for children with coeliac disease, be careful not to contaminate their food with gluten from other foods.

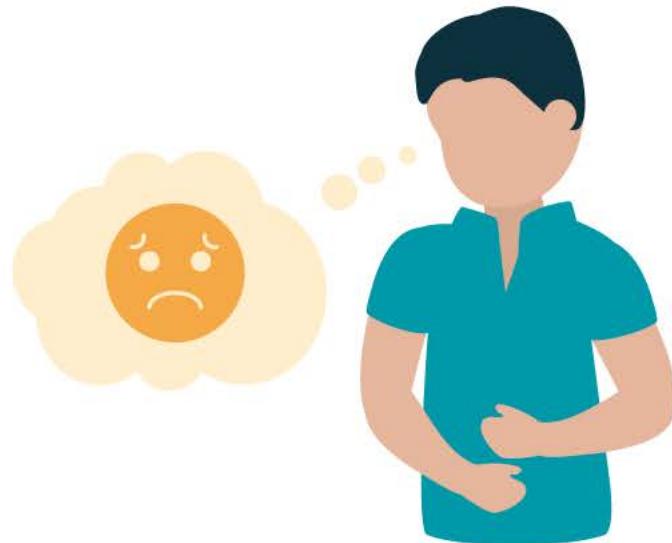
For more information about coeliac disease see the [Coeliac Australia website](#).

For more information about menu planning for coeliac disease in childcare, download this [factsheet](#).

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In summary:

- Coeliac disease is not immediately life threatening but can cause serious long term health problems if gluten is eaten.
- Children with coeliac disease must avoid all foods, ingredients and products that contain gluten.



Peanut and tree nut allergies



Peanut allergy

Children with peanut allergy must avoid all sources of peanut in their diets.

For menu planning guidance for children with peanut allergy attending care see this [fact sheet](#).



Foods that usually contain peanut

- Peanut paste or peanut butter
- Nut meal
- Muesli bars
- Some biscuits and cakes.

Download this [resource](#) from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia for a list of foods that contain peanut.



Tree nut allergy

Tree nuts include almond, Brazil nut, cashew, hazelnut, macadamia, pecan, pine nut, pistachio and walnut.

It is possible to be allergic to one kind of tree nut but be able to eat other tree nuts. For example a child might be allergic to cashew and pistachio but able to eat almond, walnut and pecan nuts. For menu planning guidance for children with tree nut allergy attending care, see this [fact sheet](#).



Foods that usually contain tree nuts

- Nut pastes and nut butters
- Nut meal
- Muesli bars
- Some biscuits and cakes.

Download this [resource](#) from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia for a list of foods that contain tree nuts.



Check for peanut and specific tree nuts in the statement of ingredients

Reading labels for peanut and tree nut allergy

INGREDIENTS: Oats, wholemeal wheat flour, honey, coconut, butter (milk), **almond**, **macadamia** nut, sesame, **peanut**, baking soda.
CONTAINS: Wheat, gluten, milk, **almond**, **macadamia**, sesame, **peanut**.

Check for peanuts and tree nuts in the summary ('contains') statement

INGREDIENTS: Wholegrain oats (60%), sugar, vegetable oils, honey, salt, molasses, emulsifier (soy), raising agent.

CONTAINS: Soy, gluten.

MAY BE PRESENT: Sesame, **almond**, **hazelnut**.

Check for peanuts and tree nuts in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present') statement

Peanut and tree nut allergies



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Peanut and tree nut allergies are different

Peanuts are a legume and grow beneath the ground. Tree nuts grow on trees. Children who are allergic to peanuts are not always allergic to tree nuts, and children with tree nut allergies are not always allergic to peanuts.

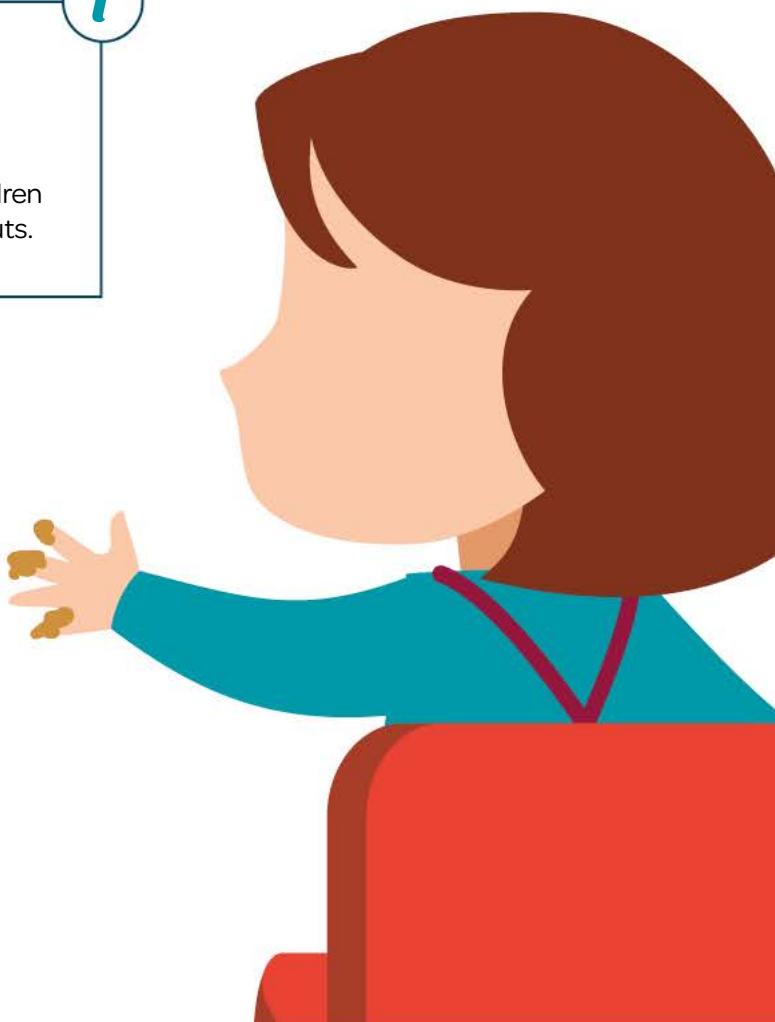
Cooking without peanuts and tree nuts

To help you change recipes for children with peanut and tree nut allergies, see the [National Allergy Council ingredient substitution tool](#) and [this fact sheet](#).



Mistakes to avoid

Peanuts and tree nuts can be hidden in unexpected foods for example, cashew nuts in 'vegan' cheese, hummus or pesto.



Allergy aware CEC Services

- Many CEC services avoid peanut and tree nuts as a risk management strategy.
- This is because peanuts and tree nut pastes are sticky and can be transferred from hands to toys and other surfaces.
- Whole or large pieces of peanuts and tree nuts are choking risks and are not recommended to be given to children under 5 years of age.
- Using an allergy aware approach is different to claiming that a service is tree nut or peanut free. Allergy aware CEC services have many things in place to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction to **any** food.

Sesame allergy

Children with sesame allergy must avoid all sources of sesame in their diets. For menu planning guidance for children with sesame allergy attending care see this [fact sheet](#).



Foods that usually contain sesame

- Sesame seed
- Tahini
- Sesame oil
- Breads, bread rolls
- Breakfast cereals
- Hommus dip

Download this [resource](#) from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia for a list of foods that contain sesame.



Check for sesame in the statement of ingredients

INGREDIENTS: Chickpeas, garlic, canola oil, tahini (sesame), acidity regulator (575), salt, citric acid.

CONTAINS: Sesame.

Check for sesame in the summary ('contains' statement)

Reading labels for sesame allergy

INGREDIENTS: Wheat flour, water, yeast, iodised salt, canola oil, soy flour, vitamins (thiamin, folic acid), and vinegar.

CONTAINS: Wheat, gluten, soy.

MAY BE PRESENT: Sesame.

Check for sesame in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present' statement)

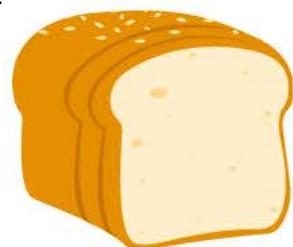
Cooking without sesame

To help you change recipes for children with sesame allergy, see the [National Allergy Council ingredient substitution tool](#) and [this fact sheet](#).



Mistakes to avoid

- Sesame (tahini) is one of the main ingredients in Hommus dip.
- Sesame seeds on bread.



Allergies to fish, crustaceans and molluscs



Children with allergies to fish, crustaceans and molluscs must avoid them.

For menu planning guidance for children with fish, crustacean and mollusc allergies attending care, see this [fact sheet](#).

Sometimes, when fish and other seafood are being cooked, the proteins can be released into the air and cause an allergic reaction. This is not usually an issue for other food allergies.



Foods that usually contain fish, crustaceans and molluscs:

Download these resources from Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia for a list of foods that contain fish, crustaceans and molluscs.



Check for fish, mollusc or crustacean in the statement of ingredients

INGREDIENTS: Atlantic salmon (fish) (25%), vegetables (25%), herbs, wheat flour, water, white fish (Atlantic Pollock or Barramundi), calamari (mollusc) canola oil, guar gum, potato, rice flour, maize starch, yeast, spices, sodium bicarbonate, sugar.

CONTAINS: Wheat, gluten, fish, mollusc.

MAY BE PRESENT: Crustacean, sesame, egg.

Reading labels for fish, mollusc and crustacean (shellfish) allergy

Check for allergens in the summary ('contains') statement

Check for allergens in the precautionary allergen labelling ('may be present') statement

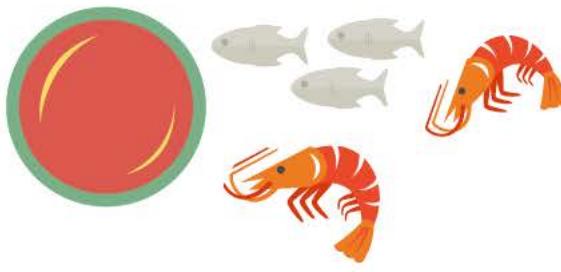
Cooking without fish, crustaceans and molluscs

To help you change recipes for children with fish, crustacean or mollusc allergies, see the [National Allergy Council ingredient substitution tool](#) and [this fact sheet](#).



Mistakes to avoid

Anchovies and prawns hidden in savoury sauces.



Making meals for children with more than one food allergy

Children may have more than one food allergy, or children with different food allergies may attend the service on the same day. This can make planning a menu difficult, particularly if children are allergic to foods that are not common food allergens, such as pea or lentil.

Using menu planning tools such as standard recipes and a food allergen menu matrix will help.

For practical step by step information on menu planning and making foods for children with more than one food allergy or children with different food allergies, see this [fact sheet](#).



Case study A new child with food allergies is enrolled

The cook at Happy Smiles CEC service is planning her menu for the week.

She checks the daily attendance sheets, and see that Rayan, a new child with cow's milk, egg and peanut allergies will be attending the service on Tuesday morning. She remembers meeting Rayan and his parents when they attended for their first visit. Another child with egg and cashew allergies also attends the service on Tuesday.

It's going to be a busy day!



Mistakes to avoid

Concentrating on one food allergen and forgetting about the other. Such as, for a child with milk and egg allergies, remembering to provide the right food for their milk allergy, but giving them a muffin containing egg by mistake.

Daily Attendance Sheet			
Day	Room	Child's Name	Child's special
Monday (wk 2)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / eg
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut a
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian
Tuesday (wk 2)	Blue	Rayan Cherki	Cow's milk / egg / peanut allergy
	Green	Kim Ng	Egg / cashew
	Green	Marco Smith	Vegetarian
Wednesday (wk 2)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Peanut / egg allergy
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian
Thursday (wk 2)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut allergy
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian
Friday (wk 2)	Blue	Jessie Andrews	Cow's milk / egg allergy
	Orange	Ethan Brown	Wheat / peanut allergy
	Green	Kim Ng	Egg / peanut / sesame allergy
	Green	Ahmed Singh	Vegetarian

The cook checks Tuesday's menu. Morning snack is homemade egg free banana muffins. Lunch is penne pasta with bolognaise sauce topped with cheese.

The cook checks the food allergen menu matrix. The banana muffins contain milk. The pasta bolognaise contains milk, and there is a precautionary allergen 'may contain' alert for egg.

She checks the recipes and thinks about some solutions for Tuesday.



Egg free banana muffins – The muffins are made with egg replacer but contain milk. She decides to make the muffins using soy milk – this works well, and everyone can eat them. When she met Rayan's parents, they said he can have soy milk and told her the brand he usually has at home.

Pasta bolognaise – The bolognaise sauce does not have any ingredients that contain egg and milk. The penne pasta has a ‘may contain’ statement for egg. The cheese contains milk. She contacts the service’s food supplier and finds some pasta spirals without precautionary allergen labelling for egg.



On Tuesday, everyone can eat the egg and milk free banana muffins for morning snack.



For lunch, she makes the bolognese sauce and cooks the egg free pasta spirals. She serves Rayan's pasta and sauce first, covers and labels it with his name and allergies.

Then she plates the food for the child with egg and cashew allergy and adds some grated cheese. She covers and labels it with their name and allergies.

She cooks the usual brand of penne pasta for the rest of the children.

When the meals are handed over to the educators, the meal sign off form for allergies and special dietary needs is used so that the educators know which food is for which child.



The cook decides to change the usual pasta brand to the new one with no 'may contain' statement for egg, to make it easier to cook this meal for the children with egg allergy in future. She updates the standard recipe and menu matrix with the new brand of pasta.

Special occasions

Pay special attention when you are providing food in ways that are different to usual.

This is when it is easy for mistakes to happen.

Make sure you plan food for children with food allergies so they can be included when:

- **Planning special events** that include food (such as Christmas, Easter, Harmony Day, teddy bear's picnic).
- **Organising celebration food** for cultural events and birthdays.
- Using food for **educational activities**. Such as cooking or baking and growing food in vegetable gardens.
- **Planning excursions** outside of the service.



How to check the food allergy management procedures in your CEC service

A **food allergy management audit** helps staff and managers assess the food safety protocols and food allergy management procedures in a Children's Education and Care service to see if you are following best practice.

Use the [Food allergy management audit tool for CEC](#) to help you conduct an audit.



National Allergy Council

Food allergen management audit tool – Children's education and care (CEC)

Aim: This tool has been developed for the Children's Education and Care Service Manager/Director or external auditor to undertake a comprehensive audit to assess the food safety protocols and procedures regarding food allergy management at [insert Children's education and care service], to identify what is working well and where things can be improved.

Before using this audit tool template, please note the following:

- This template has been developed as an evidence based best practice tool for allergy management in food service.
- This template is designed to be customised for individual Children's Education and Care services.
- This template is editable, allowing you to make changes as required. Throughout the document, you will find [red text] where information can be inserted, edited and/or removed.

Procedure and recommended verification	Current practice on site	Achieved?	Recommended action
1. Identifying food allergens to be managed			
• Documentation to identify which children have food allergies and what food(s) they are allergic to (e.g. ASCIA Action Plan) e.g. ASCIA Action Plans are obtained from management; copies kept - current location/s; Staff aware of location(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		
2. Parent provision of meals and snacks			
• A process is in place to store foods provided by parents for children with food allergies considering the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Appropriate storage to prevent cross contamination of the food while in storage (dry store, refrigerator and/or freezer), reheat (if required) and serve;- Food is clearly labelled with the child's name and date prepared/provided including list of ingredients;- Appropriate storage to meet food hygiene requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A
3. Food ordering and supplies			
Ordering <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All food items received from suppliers must have allergen information provided. If the product does not have an ingredients label, a Product Information Form (PIF)/specification sheet must be provided by the supplier• Up-to-date PIF forms/specification sheets for all products used are maintained in a central file for future reference	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A

Food allergy aware checklist for Children's Education and Care Services



Use this quick checklist to see if you have best practice procedures in place.

Enrolment

- Parents of children with food allergy must provide an ASCIA Action plan completed and signed by their health care professional.
- The CEC service should complete an individualised anaphylaxis care plan for children with an ASCIA Action Plan for anaphylaxis or an ASCIA Action Plan for allergic reactions.

Communicate with parents about their child's food allergies

- The cook or chef should meet with parents about their child's food allergies when their child is enrolled.
- Give parents accurate information about the ingredients and allergens in meals.
- For children with cow's milk or soy allergy, ask which alternative milk they use at home.
- For children with wheat allergy, ask which alternative bread they use at home.

Know which children have food allergies and the days they attend your service

- Have an up-to-date food allergy and special dietary needs record for each child.
- Use a daily attendance sheet to know which meals and snacks need to be changed for children with food allergies.

Know what is in your food

- Always use standard recipes so that the allergen content of menu items stays the same.
- Use a food allergen menu matrix to keep track of the allergens in the food and drinks you serve. Keep this up to date.
- Know how to read a food label to identify food allergens.
- Check all ingredients for allergens, including sauces, spices, garnishes, oils, and dressings.
- Only accept foods with ingredient information on the label or in a Product Information Form.
- Check food labels and Product Information Forms **every time** an order is received – ingredients can change.
- Check food labels every time you make food for children with food allergy.
- Different brand or product? Check the food label or Product Information Form in case the allergen content is different – update the food allergen menu matrix.

Food allergy aware checklist for Children's Education and Care Services



Prepare food safely to avoid cross contamination of food allergens

- Wash work surfaces, utensils and equipment and then sanitise.
- Wash hands with soap and warm water and dry with paper towel before making food for children with food allergy, and between handling different types of foods.
- Store food safely in sealed and labelled containers. Keep storage areas clean.
- Separate space: If possible, make meals for children with food allergy in a separate area.
- Separate time: If you can, make meals for children with food allergy first.
- Clearly identify food allergy meals, such as by using different coloured plates, covered and labelled with their name and food allergy.
- Know that food that is safe for a child with one food allergy may not be safe for someone with a different food allergy.
- Make infant formula for children with cow's milk or soy allergy separately to other formula.

Right food to the right child

- Use a Meal sign off form for allergies and special dietary needs to handover meals for children with food allergies from the cook or chef to the staff supervising the meal.
- Serve children with food allergy their meal first.
- Two staff should check that the right food and drinks are given to the right child.
- Always supervise children when they are eating and drinking.
- Clean up food and drink splashes and spills straight away.

Food allergy education and training

- Food safety supervisors should be up to date with their food allergen management training.
- All staff responsible for making, serving and supervising meals should complete food allergen management using the All about Allergens for Food Service in CEC free training – <https://foodallergytraining.org.au/>



- Conduct a food allergen management audit to see how well your service manages food allergens – <https://resources.foodallergytraining.org.au/>



What if something goes wrong?

Report allergic reactions to foods

All allergic reactions (where there is a risk of anaphylaxis) must be reported to the Regulatory Authority by the approved provider.

This can be done through the [National Quality Agenda IT System](#) (NQAITS) online reporting system and should be completed within 24 hours of the incident.



Documentation about the incident should include adequate details about the circumstances and the management of the reaction.

If a child with a known food allergy has an allergic reaction to a food or drink that is served to them, this must be reported to the local health department, (see page 43). Do not throw out the food or drink they consumed, as it may need to be tested.

Use this [template for reporting allergic reactions](#) to help report reactions to foods.



After an incident or near miss, review your processes to see what changes you can make to prevent something similar happening again.

Where to go for food allergen training

All about Allergens free online courses

The All about Allergens training for Food Service in Children's Education and Care online course is freely available to help food service staff, educators and managers gain knowledge about food allergens, and to develop best practice procedures for making their children's education and care service safe for children with food allergies.

Find out about the All about Allergens courses at: <https://foodallergytraining.org.au/>



national
allergy
council



All about Allergens
Training for Food Service

A range of free best practice food allergen management resources are available from the [All about Allergens Resource Hub](#).



How to recognise and treat an allergic reaction



What are the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction to food?

The signs and symptoms of food allergy can vary from person to person. An allergic reaction can happen very quickly after eating and can suddenly become life-threatening.

Signs of a mild to moderate allergic reaction can include:



Swelling of lips, face, eyes



Hives or welts

Signs of a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) include any one of the following:



Difficult/noisy breathing



Swelling of tongue



Swelling/tightness in throat



Difficulty talking and/or hoarse voice



Tingling mouth



Abdominal pain, vomiting



Wheeze or persistent cough



Persistent dizziness and/or collapse

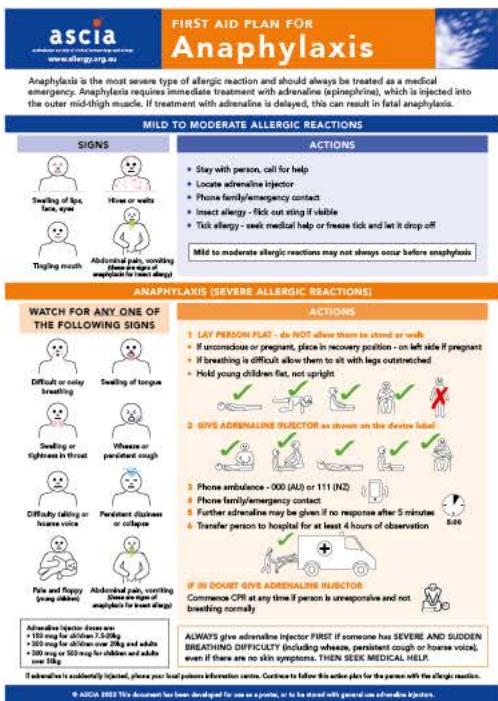


Pale and floppy (in young children)

What should you do if a child has an allergic reaction?

An allergic reaction can happen very quickly after eating and can suddenly become life-threatening.

1. Follow the child's ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis (if they have one), or the ASCIA First Aid Plan for Anaphylaxis.



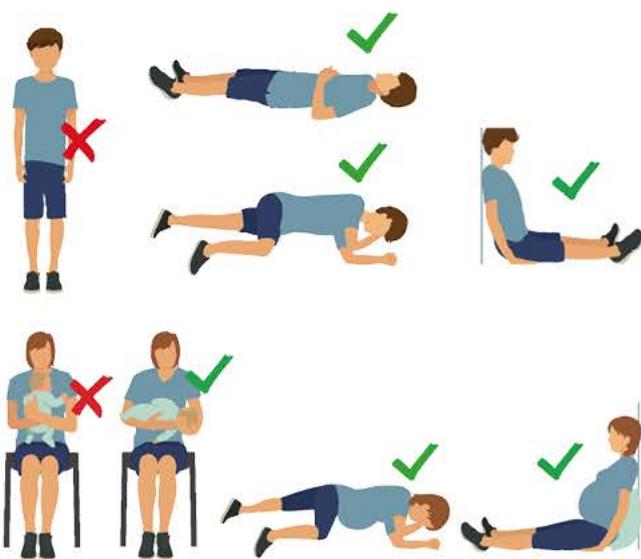
3. If required, give an adrenaline (epinephrine) device.



4. Call an ambulance (dial triple zero, 000).



2. Lay the child flat, do not allow them to stand or walk. If breathing is difficult allow them to sit on the ground with their legs outstretched or hold them flat, not upright.



5. Call the child's parent or carer.



Need more information?

National Allergy Council Resources

All about Allergens online training

The National Allergy Council All about Allergens courses provide free online training for managing food allergies in CEC. <https://foodallergytraining.org.au/>



Allergy aware resource hub

The National Allergy Council Allergy Aware resource hub provides a range of free resources for best practice guidelines for anaphylaxis prevention and management in schools and Children's Education and Care. <https://allergyaware.org.au/>



Food regulation and authorities

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ)

Information about food safety laws. <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/>



Food enforcement contacts in each region

For queries and support about complying with food safety and food allergen management laws in your local area, or to report an allergic reaction to food in your service, contact your local government agency: <https://www.foodstandards.gov.au/contact/food-regulatory-agencies>



All about Allergens resource hub

The National Allergy Council resource hub provides free resources so you can implement best practice food allergen management in your service.

To access the resource hub, go to: <https://resources.foodallergytraining.org.au/>



To find out more about the National Allergy Council, go to <https://nationalallergycouncil.org.au/>



Allergy partner organisations

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia

Information, education, advocacy, research, guidance and support for people living with food allergies. <https://allergyfacts.org.au/>



Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA)

The peak professional body of clinical immunology and allergy in Australia and New Zealand. <https://allergy.org.au>



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All about Allergens

Training for Food Service

