

Food Allergies & Food Intolerances

Tufts Dining takes food allergies and intolerances very seriously and is committed to helping students who have (or think they may have) food allergies or intolerances.

A **food allergy** is an immune system response that is triggered by an offending food protein known as an allergen. The body views the allergen as a foreign substance and produces antibodies to protect itself. Histamine and other chemicals are released from various cells within the body producing adverse physical symptoms. Most **symptoms** that develop involve the mouth, digestive tract, skin, and respiratory system. Symptoms can range from mild to life threatening, depending on the individual's tolerance to the allergen and the dose ingested. Reactions to food usually occur within seconds to up to 2 hours after eating the food; however, reactions may be delayed for 1 to 2 days.

Many people think they have a food allergy when they actually have a food intolerance. A **food intolerance** does involve a food-induced reaction, but it does not involve the immune system. An Individual with a true food allergy must totally avoid the offending food, whereas someone with a food intolerance can often tolerate some of the food without suffering symptoms.

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- **Use caution when using shared equipment and serving utensils.** For example, people may unknowingly contaminate foods by using serving utensils for a variety of foods. This is particularly true for salad bars and other self-serve counters.
- **Please ask Tufts Dining's staff to get what you need from an "uncontaminated" source** and to remove their gloves and wash their hands when necessary. Our staff will gladly comply.
- **When in doubt about the ingredients in a particular food, please ask the manager, chef manager, or lead cook** (the only individuals authorized to provide allergen information).

Questions & Comments

If you have a food allergy or intolerance, please contact **Julie Lampie, Tufts Dining's registered dietitian.** Julie is familiar with the food preparation, handling, and ingredients of the items Tufts serves, and so can help you manage your food allergy or intolerance.

Email: Julie.lampie@tufts.edu

Phone: 617-627-2833



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Making Food Choices at Tufts Easier & Safer



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Lactose intolerance is a common food intolerance. It is associated with a deficiency of the enzyme lactase which leads to an inability to digest the milk sugar lactose. **Symptoms** include abdominal pain, flatulence, and diarrhea. Intolerances, unlike food allergies, worsen with age. Lactose intolerance is quite different from the true allergic reaction some individuals have to milk protein.



Anaphylaxis

The **most severe allergic reaction** is known as **anaphylaxis**. Anaphylaxis is a sudden reaction that involves various areas of the body simultaneously. Peanuts, nuts, shellfish, fish, milk, and eggs are the foods which most commonly cause anaphylaxis, but any food may cause anaphylaxis.

One of the first **symptoms** of an anaphylactic reaction is a tingling sensation, itching, or a metallic taste in the mouth. This is frequently followed by hives, a sensation of warmth, asthma symptoms, swelling of the mouth and throat area, difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, cramping, a drop in blood pressure, and a loss of consciousness. These symptoms may occur in as little as 5 to 15 minutes, but life-threatening reactions may progress over hours.

If you or someone you know is exhibiting symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction:

- **Get help immediately.**
- Ask a Tufts Dining manager or employee to call the campus police who will dispatch the paramedics.
- Administer epinephrine if you have it on hand. (**Always carry an epi-pen** if you have any history of anaphylaxis.)
- **Do not return to your room alone.**

It is important to react quickly since this kind of reaction can be fatal. Fortunately, most people survive anaphylactic reactions.

Tufts Dining Can Help

Allergic reactions often occur when someone eats forbidden food which is hidden in other food. For this reason, Tufts Dining has taken important steps **to inform you of the ingredients in the food you eat:**

- **Nutrition Fact Cards** are posted by all multi-ingredient foods (including entrees, pizza, soup, deli, and desserts) in Dewick and Carmichael. These cards outline nutrient and ingredient information and **highlight common allergens, including peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, soybeans, wheat, crustacean shellfish, and fish.** Please check the Nutrition Fact Cards for allergens.
- All **baked goods** containing peanuts, nuts, and peanut butter have been named accordingly and have been labeled to identify the type of nut they contain.

To help people with lactose intolerance:

- **Lactose-free milk, soy milk and rice milk** are offered at Dewick and Carmichael.
- Students unable to tolerate cheese may ask cooks or servers at Dewick and Carmichael to prepare **sandwiches and pizza without any cheese or with soy cheese.**

If you have a food allergy or intolerance, **make an appointment with Tufts Dining's dietitian, Julie Lampie, (617-627-2833)** so she can review your diet and give you a **customized list of foods to avoid.**

Avoiding Cross Contamination

Cross contamination occurs when a food comes into contact with another food and their proteins mix, creating the potential for the unsuspecting individual to experience an allergic reaction. To avoid cross contamination:

- **Do not eat fried foods** if you have food allergies. Frying oil is often reused before being changed; this can lead to cross contamination because foods fried in oil release some of their protein which is absorbed by other foods fried in the same oil.

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