

Major Food Allergens

Most common food allergens

These major foods account for the most common food allergies:

- Peanuts
- Tree nuts (such as almonds, pecans, and walnuts)
- Crustacean shellfish (such as crab, lobster, and shrimp)
- Fish (such as salmon, tuna, and halibut)
- Eggs
- Milk
- Soy
- Wheat
- Sesame

As of Jan. 1, 2023, FDA recognized sesame as the ninth major food allergen. Even though sesame is not named as an allergen in the Minnesota food code, food labeling requirements now include sesame.

These foods, and any ingredient that contains protein derived from one or more of them, are designated as “major food allergens.” Examples of some food products that may contain allergens as ingredients include:

- Candy
- Glazes
- Sauces
- Meat substitutes

Symptoms

Symptoms of an allergic reaction include:

- Stomachache
- Vomiting
- Hives
- Difficulty breathing
- Swelling
- Blood pressure drop
- Shock

These symptoms can occur right away or up to several hours after exposure to an allergen.

Responsibilities of the PIC

Regarding allergens, the PIC must:

- Be able to describe foods identified as major food allergens.
- Know the symptoms caused by the major food allergens.
- Ensure employees are trained in food safety, including food allergy awareness.

Allergen labeling

Allergen labeling is required for packaged food products that contain any of the major food allergens.

The label must identify by name any major food allergens in the product as part of the ingredient list. The list must also include protein derived from a major food allergen. Use one of the following labeling options:

MAJOR FOOD ALLERGENS

1. List the common or usual name of the food source, followed by the name of the allergen in parentheses. Example: flour (wheat), whey (milk).

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-4500 or 651-201-6000.

OR

2. After the ingredient list, place the word 'Contains' followed by the food allergen. Example: Contains: wheat, milk.

For tree nuts, declare the specific type of nut. Examples: Contains: almonds, coconuts, pecans.

For fish or crustacean shellfish, declare the species. Examples: Contains: walleye, shrimp, and lobster.

Resources

[Minnesota Department of Health Food Business Safety](http://www.health.state.mn.us/foodbizsafety)
(www.health.state.mn.us/foodbizsafety)

[Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education, and Research \(FASTER\) Act Overview: FDA's Perspective](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bhw1rLUNRLM)
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bhw1rLUNRLM>)

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