

Key Information for adolescents and young adults living with food allergy

Your Adrenaline pens

Adrenaline is the best medicine to treat severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) and should be given at the *first sign* that a reaction is severe or even if you are not sure! **It is a safe medicine and it is never wrong to use adrenaline to manage the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions.**

You do not need permission from doctors/nurses or the emergency services to use your adrenaline pen- Treat your symptoms with your adrenaline pen and then straight afterwards **call 999/112** to get help on the way!

Your team (doctors & nurses) that look after you once you reach the emergency department will always be glad that you gave yourself your adrenaline pen before arriving as this way you are already managing the symptoms and helping your body get through the (severe) allergic reaction safely.



Will your allergic reactions always be severe? (anaphylaxis)

Allergic reactions are standalone events, your body will decide at the time of exposure to your food allergen whether you will have mild or severe symptoms while you journey through the allergic reaction. Treat what you see and feel. The type (mild or severe) of allergic reaction you had the last time does not influence the type of reaction you will have the next time!

None of the allergy tests (skin prick tests or blood tests) that we do at the allergy clinic can predict ahead if your reaction will be severe or mild- so preparation and knowledge is key!

Get to know the signs and symptoms of mild and severe allergic reactions and always carry two adrenaline pens so you can treat unexpected severe allergic reactions!

So what are the **signs and symptoms** of a **Severe Allergic Reaction? Important!**- these signs and symptoms should be treated with your **Adrenaline pen and then you lie down and call for help (ring 999/112 say "Anaphylaxis")**

Airway Obstructed

- Hoarseness
- Difficulty swallowing
- Itching or swelling inside your throat
- Swollen tongue
- Wheezing

Breathing Difficulties

- Feeling breathless
- Coughing or any noisy breathing
- Unable to speak

Circulation Impaired


- Pale or clammy skin
- Rapid weak pulse
- Blue tinge around your mouth
- Feeling faint, light headed or weak
- Feeling confused or really agitated

Other

- Hives or rash all over your body
- Really swollen eyes and lips or
- Severe tummy cramps


Mild allergic reactions are *mild* signs and symptoms including *any* of the following..

- Itchy mouth/ tingling lips
- Mild swelling of lips or around the eyes/face
- Hives
- Blotchy rash
- Itchy rash
- Tummy pain
- Feeling sick or a vomit

 **Remember! If in doubt use your adrenaline pen and call for help (dial 999 or 112)**



Travelling via aeroplane when you have food allergy

- Aeroplane travel is a normal activity and *not* more risky for you than a person without a food allergy, you just need to do a bit more preparation!
- Allergic reactions to nut are not triggered by airborne sources but by accidentally eating nut or due to nut cross contamination.
-  Have plenty of safe snacks and drinks with you at all times and just eat these safe foods for the 2 hours *before and during* the flight. **Always carry your adrenaline pens x 2 with you at all times**, don't check them in with luggage!

For more information about travelling with food allergy and especially when travelling alone as an adolescent or a young adult, scan this code



Reading food labels

- Knowing how to read food labels is important- the top 14 food allergens will be written in **bold**, *italics* or underlined if they are contained in the foods ingredients.
- They will be declared to you written in the ingredients part of the outer packaging.
- You should be checking this ingredients packaging before you eat the food- it will only take a few seconds!



-  **Remember Every Label Every Time!**



Kissing

XOXO

Some young adults and teenagers with nut allergy may worry about kissing! So what are the facts?

- Nut proteins can be found in the saliva (spit) of someone who has eaten nuts for up to 4 hours.
- It is possible that kissing someone who has recently eaten nuts could trigger an allergic reaction, however it is most likely going to be mild and as always treat what you see & feel with guidance from your management plan.



Tell then kiss! Tell the other person about your nut allergy sooner rather than later. **Remember - never feel pressured to kiss anyone who doesn't prioritise your safety** - if they do not take your allergy seriously they might not be worth your time!

...one last very important thing about your adrenaline pens!!



Do you know how to deliver your pen? -

practice these steps with a trainer pen- ask your allergy team for one!

1. Sit down
2. Hold your adrenaline pen in a fist like grip
3. Remove the safety cap (know where this is on your brand of adrenaline pen)
4. Deliver the pen into your mid outer thigh , when you hear the "click" hold for the count of 10
5. Call for help- dial **999/112** say "**Anaphylaxis**"
6. Stay lying down as flat as you can tolerate or sitting down with feet raised



If you would like to watch all our Food Allergy information in short videos please scan the **QR CODE** and it will bring you to our Food Allergy showcase for Adolescents.