



Food Allergy Facts and Statistics

- Food allergy is a growing public health concern in the U.S.
- Though reasons for this are poorly understood, the prevalence of food allergies and associated anaphylaxis appears to be on the rise.
 - Peanut allergy doubled in children over a five-year period (1997-2002).
 - Research suggests that food-related anaphylaxis might be underdiagnosed.
 - An increasing number of school students and staff have diagnosed life-threatening allergies.
 - A 2007 study has shown that milk allergy may persist longer in life than previously thought. Of 800 children with milk allergy, only 19 percent had outgrown their allergy by age 4, and only 79 percent had outgrown it by age 16.
- More than 12 million Americans have food allergies. That's one in 25, or 4 percent of the population.
- The incidence of food allergy is highest in young children – one in 17 among those under age 3.
- About 3 million children in the U.S. have food allergies.
- In the U.S., food allergy is the leading cause of anaphylaxis (a severe allergic reaction) outside the hospital setting. A recent analysis of data from U.S. hospital emergency departments (ED) estimated a total of 20,821 hospital ED visits, 2,333 visits for anaphylaxis, and 520 hospitalizations caused by food allergy in just a 2 month period.
- Each year in the U.S., it is estimated that anaphylaxis caused by food results in 100 to 200 deaths. Death can be sudden, sometimes occurring within minutes.
- Eight foods account for 90 percent of all food-allergic reactions in the U.S.: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (e.g., walnuts, almonds, cashews, pistachios, pecans), wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish.
- There is no cure for food allergies. Strict avoidance of food allergens and early recognition and management of allergic reactions to food are important measures to prevent serious health consequences.
- Even trace amounts of a food allergen can cause a reaction.
- Most people who've had an allergic reaction to something they ate thought that it was safe.
- Food allergies are life-altering for everyone involved and require constant vigilance.
- Early administration of epinephrine (adrenaline) is crucial to successfully treating anaphylactic reactions. Epinephrine is available by prescription in a self-injectable device (EpiPen® or Twinject®).