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PEANUT OR NUT FREE DIET

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Reactions to peanuts or nuts can be life threatening. Once diagnosed it is important that nuts and all sources of nuts are excluded from the diet at all times. Peanut allergy is usually lifelong although a few patients do “grow out” of it.

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Manufacturers are definitely improving labelling but you still have to find out a lot about the content of foods yourself. Some foods obviously contain nuts but in others nuts may be a hidden ingredient. A Peanut is a member of the LEGUME family and is classified as a VEGETABLE. If you are allergic to peanuts you may be advised to avoid foods such as peas, beans, lentils and other legumes, a list of which is given on page 3. High risk foods should only be introduced with the supervision of a Doctor or Dietician. Never reintroduce peanuts into the diet without medical supervision. Always read product labels. Always.

If in doubt of the contents of any product, contact the manufacturer before trying it.

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Some people who react to peanuts also react to unrefined or gourmet peanut oil. Peanut oil is sometimes called GROUNDNUT or ARACHIS Oil. Unless you know that you do not react to it, unrefined peanut oil should be avoided. Unfortunately, manufacturers often label foods as containing ‘Vegetable oil’ which may well contain Peanut oil.

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Some cosmetics, creams or ointments contain or are made with Arachis oil. Some nipple creams used (while breastfeeding), contain Arachis oil as do some creams and ointments used to treat atopic (allergic) eczema. Some manufacturers have changed to using other oils in their products since concern was raised about peanut oil. However, refined Arachis oil is highly unlikely to cause a reaction. The refining process removes a majority of peanut protein. Tests have shown that peanut allergic individuals are highly unlikely to react to refined arachis oil. Any reactions were very mild. Avoidance of arachis oil may be preferable for infants, especially those with eczema. There are many equivalent arachis oil-free products.

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Cross reactions to different nuts

Some people react only to one type of nut eg. peanuts. Others are known to react to different types of nuts. Unless you know that you do not react to certain nuts it is best to avoid all nuts. Some foods may become contaminated by touching other foods containing nuts. It is advisable to avoid all loose foods in delicatessens and bakeries for example.

What you can do?

Write to your local supermarket for a list of products which they consider to be nut free.

Keep to brands which are either labelled as nut free on the packet or are guaranteed as nut free by the manufacturers lists.

Do not eat anything you are not sure about. Check directly with the manufacturer.

Make your own cakes & biscuits, using a known and safe source of oil or fat e.g., Corn oil, Sunflower oil or Olive oil.

Eating out

Take 'safe' foods to parties.

Give the people who will be providing your meals notice of the foods you can or cannot eat, i.e. restaurants, friends, relatives.

People cannot help prevent your Allergic reaction if they are not aware you are allergic to nuts or peanuts.

Never take a waitress's word that a food is safe, ALWAYS talk directly to the Chef, and ascertain what type of cooking oil has been used.

Plain foods are safer.

Check NO nut products have been used.

Try and use the same restaurants so you can build up some trust with the staff.

Parties

There is no need for any child to avoid parties. Go along if you feel you need to discuss the problem with the organiser. Giving your child a box of his / her own biscuits and sweets is an option.

School meals

Schools vary in their willingness to provide food for children with severe allergy. Unless you can be sure the food is nut free it is advisable to provide your own child with a packed lunch.

If you use Adrenaline ALWAYS take it with you.

Teaching your children to avoid dangerous foods

As soon as you can, teach your child that certain foods can make him / her very ill.

Try to relate the food to an episode that the child remembers.

Encourage your child to ask “**Does it contain nuts?**”

Teach him / her to avoid unfamiliar foods.

The Legume Family

You may be advised to avoid the following if you have had a severe reaction to peanuts.

Alfafa (Sprouts)	Red Clover	Tamarind	Coumarin
Butter Beans	Bean Sprouts	Tonka Bean	Baked Beans
Liquorice	Haricot Beans	String Beans	Chick Peas
Black Eyed Beans	Fenugreek	Jicama	Kuazu
Carob, Carob Syrup	Gum Tragacanth (E413)	Lentils	Peas
Gum Acacia (E 414)	Soya Bean & Soya Bean Products		

Medication

Always carry your rescue medication, antihistamines, Epi-Pen Auto Injector, Anapen Auto Injection or Mini-Jet with you.

Have at least 2 Epi-Pens, Anapens or Mini-Jets supplied.

Check Epi-Pen, Anapen or Mini-Jets regularly to ensure that they are in date and in good condition.

Ensure everyone knows where to find your rescue medication and how to use it.

Tell everyone about the Allergy. (Some peanut allergic subjects can develop a reaction if kissed by someone who has been eating peanuts.)

People cannot help prevent your Allergic reaction if they are not aware you are allergic to peanuts.

Be sure you know the location of the nearest Hospital / Health Centre.

Know how to access the emergency services in the country you are visiting. Check with the Travel Agent or holiday representative before travelling the number of the emergency services.

Make sure your rescue medication is with your hand luggage. Some Airlines may require a covering letter from a Medical Practitioner when carrying injections. Please, check with the booking agent.

Translation Cards

If you go abroad for your holidays The British Allergy Foundation will provide Translation Cards which cater for all European languages including some other languages. These Translation cards can be worn on display or actually shown to Hotel, or restaurant staff. It is vital for use in an emergency as a method of identifying the allergy. It could be a lifesaver. There is a charge of £15 for a set of 3 translation cards. Please phone **01322 619898**.

It is strongly recommended that a bracelet, necklace or other warning emblem be visible to inform others of a potential problem or emergency treatment needed, e.g. Ambulance, Doctor, or Hospital.

Foods to avoid

Oils

Blended Oils, Unrefined / Gourmet Peanut, Arachis and Groundnut oils.

Biscuits

All Biscuits, Almonds, Coconut biscuits, Macaroons, or Nut Oils.

Preserves

Peanut Butter, Chestnut Puree, Chocolate and Hazel Spread, Praline Spread, Sweet Mincemeat.

Cakes

Christmas Cake, Fruit Cake, Stollen, Marzipan containing cakes, Carrot Cake, Passion Cake, Cakes bought in Delicatessen, Cakes containing vegetable oil.

Cereals

Crunchy Nut Cornflakes, Fruit & Fibre, Muesli, Shreddies, Fruitful, etc.,

Dips & Sauces

Pesto Sauce, Waldorf Salad.

Vegetarian Food

Nut Loaf, Vegeb主rgers, Sausages. (Some products may be OK – Check Labels).

Desserts

Nut Yoghurt, Nut Ice-creams, Cakes, Puddings containing nuts.

Sweets

Nuts, Nougat, Nut Brittle, Halva, Snickers, Topic, Fruit & Nut, Bounty, Toblerone, Liquorice Allsorts, Pralines, Florentines. Always Check Labels.

Others

Some Chinese Foods e.g. Satay.

It is also advisable to avoid Creams and Shampoos containing nut extracts.

Always check the labels on all food purchased

Foods allowed

Oils

Sunflower Oil, Olive Oil, Safflower Oil

Biscuits

Home made biscuits made with known source of oil.

Preserves

Jam, Marmalade, Honey.

Cakes

Home made cakes containing known ingredients. Cakes guaranteed to be Nut free by manufacturers.

Cereals

Weetabix, Shredded Wheat, Wheat, Cornflakes, Rice, Krispies Etc.

European Labelling NOW in Latin

All Soaps, Cosmetics and Personal Care Products from 1st January 1999 have to carry a FULL ingredients list printed in LATIN. This is to try and standardise the wording in all European Community Countries.

Products also included under this European Directive are as follows:-

Toiletries, Perfumes, Toothpaste, Shampoo, Hair Care Products, Creams and Deodorants.

Some LATIN translations are listed below:-

Peanut Oil	Arachis Hypogaea
Bitter Almond	Prunus Amara
Sweet Almond	Prunus Dulcis
Sesame	Sesamum Indicum
Walnut	Juglans Regia or Juglans Nigra
Brazil	Bertholetia Excelsa
Hazelnut	Corylus Rostrata or Corylus Americana or Corylus Avellana
EGG	Ovum
MILK	Lac
Mixed Fish Oil	Piscum lecur
Cod Liver Oil	Gadi lecur
“MAY CONTAIN”	is indicated not in Latin but by { =/- }

THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO FOOD LABELLING