



## Nut allergy in the classroom!!!:

A great resource for safe snacks is [www.snacksafely.com](http://www.snacksafely.com) they update their guide every few weeks. (Please note that this list does not include snacks safe for a sesame seed allergy) Shoprite offers a few baked goods that are clearly marked "**Made in a Nut Free Facility**". Please keep in mind that ingredients change and a snack that may have been safe last week may not be safe today.

**Cross contamination is also a big risk.** In general, cross-contamination occurs when an unsafe food taints a safe food by touching it or by touching the same surface. From a food allergy perspective, this occurs when a food that doesn't include any allergenic ingredients is tainted with allergens in preparation, cooking, storage, or service.. Cross-contamination is also the reason many manufacturers **voluntarily** include warnings about manufacturing lines or facilities using major allergens **(there is, to date, no legal requirement for manufacturers to do so, nor do manufacturers tend to label the presence of food additives or non-"big eight" allergens in their factories or manufacturing lines).**

For more information you can research on the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) website: <http://www.foodallergy.org/section/education>

**What is a food allergy?:** Food allergy occurs when the immune system mistakenly attacks a food protein. Ingestion of the offending food may trigger the sudden release of chemicals, including histamine, resulting in symptoms of an allergic reaction. **A food allergy can be potentially fatal.** Scientists estimate that approximately 12 million Americans suffer from food allergies, or one in 25. One in 17 children age 3 and under has a food allergy.

**Symptoms:** Symptoms may include one or more of the following: a tingling sensation in the mouth, swelling of the tongue and the throat, difficulty breathing, hives, vomiting, abdominal cramps, diarrhea, drop in blood pressure, loss of consciousness, and even death. Symptoms typically appear within minutes to two hours after the person has eaten the food to which he or she is allergic.

**Treatment:** Strict avoidance of the allergy-causing food is the only way to avoid a reaction. Reading ingredient labels for all foods is the key to avoiding a reaction. If a product doesn't have a label, individuals with a food allergy should not eat that food. If you have any doubt whether a food is safe, call the manufacturer for more information. There is no cure for food allergies. Studies are inconclusive about whether food allergies can be prevented.

**Prevention:** Studies are inconclusive about whether food allergies can be prevented. Parents should become familiar with the early signs of allergic disease such as eczema, hives, repeated diarrhea and/or vomiting in reaction to formulas, wheezing, and talk to a doctor about those symptoms.

**Methods for cleaning peanut allergen from surfaces.** Common household cleaning agents, such as Formula 409®, Lysol® Sanitizing Wipes, and Target brand® cleaner with bleach, removed peanut allergen from tabletops except for dishwashing liquid.

For removal of peanut allergens from hands, liquid soap, bar soap, and commercial wipes were very effective. **Plain water and antibacterial hand sanitizer is not effective.**

Thank you and feel free to contact the nurse with **ANY** questions!