



PREPARING ALLERGEN-SAFE MEALS IN THE HOME

GENERAL ISSUES

- Keeping a home “food allergy safe” requires consideration of the age(s) of those with the allergy
 - For young children, keep unsafe foods out of reach (high shelves, locked)
 - Watch out for young children picking food from the garbage or taking other’s food
- Always read ingredient labels, even if you used a food before
- Skin or hair products, and pet food could contain an allergen
- Typical cleaning (soap, water, dishwasher) should adequately remove allergens from dishware, counter tops, utensils and cooking equipment.
- Depending upon the allergen and eating preferences of the family, some families choose to exclude the food allergen
- Remind relatives and guests about your child’s food allergy.
- Consider bulk cooking, baking and freezing to create your own “convenience” foods.

TIPS TO CONSIDER FOR INCREASING SAFETY

- Stickers/colored tape (green/red) can be used to identify safe/unsafe foods
- Designate a shelf in the refrigerator and in the pantry for “safe” foods and store them covered
- Make sure the food preparation surfaces, utensils and all cooking equipment have been cleaned with hot soapy water and rinsed – to remove any food allergens. Anyone participating in the meal preparation should first wash their hands.
- Use a clean utensil for each dish to avoid cross contact. For example,
 - A spoon used to stir macaroni and cheese should not be used to stir beef stew
 - A knife used to spread peanut butter should not be dipped in the jelly jar
- Prepare non-allergenic foods first and protect them from splatters, splashes, or spills of allergenic foods.
- To avoid respiratory symptoms, remove the child from the kitchen when allergens are being heated (boiling milk, frying eggs or fish)
- Towels used to clean an allergen should be kept from reach and washed after use

TIPS FOR COOKING

The following *ingredient substitutions* may be helpful for preparing allergen-safe meals.

Ask your doctor if you are unsure if an ingredient is safe for your child.

Milk/ Butter

- Substitute equal amounts of soy or rice beverage, juices or water in recipes that call for milk
- Look for a milk-free, soy-free margarine with a low water content (usually stick instead of tub) to improve the quality of baked goods

Egg

- For each egg, one of the following may be substituted in recipes:
 1. 1 tsp. baking powder, 1 Tbsp. water, 1 Tbsp. Vinegar
 2. 1 tsp. yeast dissolved in ¼ cup warm water
 3. 1 Tbsp. apricot puree
 4. 1 and ½ Tbsp. water, 1 and ½ Tbsp. oil, 1 tsp. baking powder
 5. 1 packet gelatin, 2 Tbsp. warm water (do not mix until ready to use)

(if baked goods are too dry with the above substitution add ¼ to ½ cup of applesauce to the recipe)

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From: www.cofargroup.org

Wheat

To replace the nutrients in a wheat-free diet, use a variety of whole grain flours, if tolerated, such as oat, corn, soy, potato, tapioca, bean, barley, quinoa, millet, buckwheat, arrowroot, amaranth, or brown rice flour.

To replace 1 Tablespoon of wheat flour for thickening try:

- 1 ½ teaspoon of cornstarch, potato flour, rice starch, or arrowroot starch
- 1 Tablespoon of white or brown rice flour
- 2 Tablespoons of quick-cooking tapioca
- 2 Tablespoons tomato paste

If you bake your own breads try one of the following to replace 1 cup of wheat flour:

- ½ cup of oat flour plus ½ cup rice flour (to prevent the grainy texture the rice flour may give, soak it with liquids that are called for in the recipe for a few minutes before continuing with the recipe instructions)
- ¾ cup plus 2 Tablespoons rice flour
- ½ cup potato starch flour and ½ cup soy flour
- 2/3 cup brown rice flour and 1/3 cup potato flour
- 1 cup corn flour
- 1 scant cup fine corn meal
- ¾ cup coarse cornmeal

If the wheat free baked goods are crumbling, consider using xanthan gum or guar gum; follow the directions on the bottle or box. These can be found at health food stores or specialty mail order stores.

Other tips for managing a wheat-free diet:

- Rice is a staple for many ethnic diets, especially Hispanic and Asian. Rice can be used to make main meals, soups, and desserts.
- Spaghetti squash and noodles made from quinoa, rice, corn, or other acceptable grain can be used as a pasta substitute.
- Rice flour provides a crunchy crust when used to coat foods for frying
- Use pureed vegetables such as peas, carrots, and potatoes to thicken soups and stews.
- Use popcorn, fresh fruits and vegetables for snacks.
- Potatoes can be cooked in a variety of ways and served at most meals.

Cooking Grains:

<u>Grain (1 cup)</u>	<u>Cups of liquid</u>	<u>Simmering time</u>	<u>Standing time</u>	<u>Yield</u>
Amaranth	2 ½	20-25 min.	-----	2 c.
Barley (pearled)	3	50 min.	10 min.	3½ c.
Brown rice	2 ¼	45 min	10 min.	3-3½ c.
Buckwheat	2	10-12 min.	5 min.	2 c.
Oats (whole groats)	2 ¼	1 hr.	10 min.	2-2½ c.
Quinoa	2	15 min.	5 min.	3-3½ c.
White rice	2	15 min.	5 min.	3 c.

RESOURCES

-This program has additional information sheets that you may find helpful
 -Explore additional educational materials, for example, from Food Allergy Research & Education (www.foodallergy.org)

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