

## PREPARING AHEAD

### Time required - Just 20 minutes

No items required for this session. Just get your team together and get started!

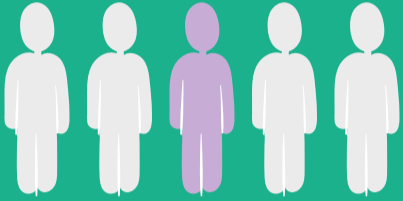
# ACT ON ALLERGENS WEEK 1 - WHAT IS AN ALLERGEN?

## INTRODUCTION

Today we will cover a brief overview of what allergies/intolerances are and why they are so important to us in the foodservice sector.

Ultimately it is everyone's responsibility to ensure we keep our customers safe and it is Chartwells' top priority.

## ONE IN FIVE PEOPLE HAVE A FOOD ALLERGY



## TRAINING CONTENT

### ASK THE AUDIENCE:

What is an allergy? What is an allergen?  
What is an intolerance? Do you know what the difference is?

#### ANSWERS:

**Allergy:** A reaction by the body's immune system to a particular food or substance.

**Intolerance:** A difficulty digesting a food and having unpleasant symptoms.

**Allergen:** A substance that causes an allergic reaction.

#### THE DIFFERENCE:

The symptoms of an allergic reaction may be more severe than an intolerance because the body's immune system is provoked by the food. Nevertheless, we must treat allergies and intolerances with the same care as they both can cause harm to an affected customer.



### ANSWERS

- |                |             |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Gluten      | 8. Fish     |
| 2. Sesame      | 9. Mustard  |
| 3. Nuts        | 10. Milk    |
| 4. Crustaceans | 11. Celery  |
| 5. Eggs        | 12. Peanuts |
| 6. Sulphite    | 13. Lupin   |
| 7. Molluscs    | 14. Soya    |

There are 14 legal allergens which have to be declared to our customers.

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THEM?



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13



14

**However:** it is important to note that people can be allergic to any food type; eg. peas, food additives, tomatoes, bananas, chickpeas etc. People often have a combination of allergies e.g. milk, egg & tomato.

**FACT:** How many **different** foodstuffs have people been found to be allergic to across the world? **ANSWER:** Approximately 170!

**FACT:** What is the most common food allergy in the UK? **ANSWER:** Nuts.

Remember that allergens are not always obvious in food. Some examples of where surprising allergens can be found include:

**Soya** - Often found in gluten free pasta, some breads, vegetarian sausages/products

**Tomatoes** - often found in gravy mix

**Chickpeas** - Sometimes found in bread mixes and pizza bases

**Sesame** - Often found in bread products

**Green peas** - Often found in vegetarian protein alternatives, such as veggie sausages, and sometimes in gluten free bread!

### REMEMBER!

Incorrect allergen information **can be fatal**.  
You may remember the tragic **Pret a Manger** case...



## WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE EATS SOMETHING THAT THEY ARE ALLERGIC TO?

The onset can be very quick or later on in the day. These are symptoms you might witness:

- **Swelling lips**
- **Rashes**
- **Wheezing**
- **Upset stomach** – diarrhoea, vomiting
- **Anaphylaxis** – struggling to breathe

If you identify any of these symptoms, **immediately call 999** and alert a member of staff on your site.

### SEVERITY:

Some individuals may be able to tolerate very small amounts (e.g. cooked egg in well-baked cakes) if they have an egg allergy. Some people will react to just a **'TRACE'** of an allergen.

### AIRBORNE ALLERGIES:

Some people react when allergens are inhaled.

### Ask the team: What have we learnt?:

Never take the risk of assuming someone's tolerance level and avoid cross-contamination as much as possible. Make sure you know what symptoms to look out for and stay vigilant to identify anyone having a reaction.

## REACTING QUICKLY CAN SAVE LIVES.

## INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY

### SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES:

Ask your team to volunteer to share their own experiences with allergies.

- Do the team have any allergies themselves?**
- Do they have any friends or family with allergies?**
- How does an allergy impact someone's life?**

## SUMMARY

- Allergies & intolerances are hugely important and Chartwells treat them with great respect.
- Allergy reports declare the 14 main legal allergens to our customers.
- People can be allergic to almost any food type imaginable, as well as a combination of foods.
- The severity of people's allergies or intolerances can vary.
- Treat all allergies and intolerances with great care.
- If you witness any symptoms such as rashes, swelling or difficulty breathing you should alert a member of the site staff immediately

## QUICK FIRE QUIZ

Quiz the team on the below questions. Read out the multiple choice answers.

Correct answers are in **bold**.

1. WHAT IS AN ALLERGY?

a) **A reaction by the body's immune system to a food or substance**

b) A reaction by the body's digestive system to a food or substance

2. ARE CHICKPEAS INCLUDED IN THE 14 LEGAL ALLERGENS?

a) Yes

**b) No**

3. CAN PEOPLE BE ALLERGIC TO MORE THAN ONE FOOD?

**a) Yes**

b) No

4. WHERE MIGHT YOU COMMONLY FIND CELERY AS AN INGREDIENT?

**a) Ketchup**

b) Mayonnaise

5. PEOPLE CAN REACT TO PARTICLES OF A FOOD TYPE IN THE AIR?

**a) True**

b) False