



KIDS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES

CHRISTMAS



Celebrate with
Food Allergies and
Have Fun Too!



Inside find suggestions
to celebrate Christmas

At Home
At School



The following are crafts, activities and recipes to take the emphasis away from food, and make Christmas fun for everyone!

Crafts (non-food related)

- ◆ Create “Gingerbread” men or a “Gingerbread” house out of cardboard or brown foam sheets. Decorate with other foam pieces, glitter, markers, paint and any other creative ideas you have.

- ◆ Make homemade ornaments out of:

- ◆ Wood
- ◆ Scraps from home
- ◆ Foam sheets
- ◆ Mosaic pieces
- ◆ Popsicle® sticks
- ◆ Pictures
- ◆ Puzzle pieces
- ◆ Ornament packages available at arts and craft stores.



- ◆ String beads for the Christmas tree instead of stringing popcorn.
- ◆ Make homemade wreaths out of artificial foliage, ribbons, plastic fruit, bells, and other decorations.
- ◆ Make homemade candles for the holiday using shapes that you can buy at the arts and crafts store or dip them with a wick into the wax. You can melt your own wax out of crayons or buy wax. (Confirm safety for your child’s allergies and age.)
- ◆ Make stockings out of felt or cloth.
- ◆ Learn to knit or crochet homemade stockings.
- ◆ Write letters to Santa Claus.
- ◆ Make Christmas cards and see if you can donate them to children at a hospital or a homeless shelter for families.



Religious Crafts (Non-food related)

- ◆ Make ornaments reflecting the traditional meaning of Christmas:
 - ◇ The star - heavenly signs of prophecy fulfilled long ago and the shining hope of mankind.
 - ◇ The color red - the first color of Christmas which symbolizes Jesus' sacrifice.
 - ◇ The fir tree - green, which is the second color of Christmas and shows everlasting light and life. The needles point to heaven.
 - ◇ The bell - rings out to guide the lost sheep back, which signifies that all are precious to God.
 - ◇ The candle - a mirror of starlight, reflecting our thanks to the star of Bethlehem.
 - ◇ The gift bow - tied as we should all be tied together in bonds of goodwill forever.
 - ◇ The candy cane - represents the shape of the shepherd's crook, used to bring lost lambs back.
 - ◇ The wreath - a symbol of the never ending eternal value of love.
- ◆ Make an Advent wreath with candles.
- ◆ Make homemade Advent calendars:
 - ◇ Make a calendar out of felt board, then cut felt pieces into different shapes to hold small treats or gifts for every day of Advent.
 - ◇ Make a board with pockets, and add small safe treats to the pockets for the kids for everyday of Advent.
 - ◇ Buy ready-made Advent calendars that are empty and add pieces.
- ◆ Do something special for each day of Advent.



Activities (Non-food related)

- ◆ Have your child pick a special non-food treat to leave for Santa.
- ◆ Make a Nativity scene at home.
- ◆ Have your kids make a Nativity play and perform it, or go see a Nativity play.
- ◆ Volunteer on Christmas at your local hospital.
- ◆ Go caroling around your neighborhood.
- ◆ Learn how to play Christmas carols on the piano.
- ◆ Go see the Nutcracker ballet.
- ◆ Enjoy time at a Christmas arts and crafts fair.
- ◆ Go “light-seeing” around your neighborhood or city.
- ◆ Attend a holiday light show at your local zoo on Christmas Eve.
- ◆ Drive around your neighborhood or to view Christmas lights.
- ◆ Visit Santa at the local mall.
- ◆ Have Christmas story time with friends and family.
- ◆ Watch old Classic Christmas movies like Frosty the Snowman, The Little Drummer Boy, Santa Claus is Comin’ to Town, or Rudolf the Red-Nosed Reindeer.
- ◆ Skip the food issue altogether by spending special time with family in non food-related activities.



- ◆ Play fun board games on Christmas.
 - ◇ Play Christmas charades acting out things that only relate to Christmas.
 - ◇ Play Christmas Pictionary®.
- ◆ Learn about the history of Christmas with your children.
- ◆ Learn about the different dates on which Christmas is celebrated:
 - ◇ Armenian Apostolic Church on January 6th.
 - ◇ Eastern Orthodox Churches on January 7th, which is the date on the Gregorian calendar corresponding to December 25th on the Julian Calendar.
- ◆ Learn about customs from other countries and cultures, such as:
 - ◇ In Germany, children put wooden shoes out on December 5th and St. Nicholas leaves candy or small gifts in their shoes in the morning. They also learn about the Christmas spider legend.
 - ◇ In Finland, they say a Declaration of Christmas Peace.
 - ◇ In Holland, the children get presents from Santa in their shoes, rather than under the tree.
 - ◇ In Russia, Grandfather Frost brings presents on New Year's Eve.
 - ◇ In Hungary, Baby Jesus delivers the presents to children.
 - ◇ In Poland, Santa brings gifts on December 5th and Christmas Eve.
 - ◇ In Mexico, Christmas festivities begin with *Las Posadas*, nine consecutive days of candlelight processions and lively parties starting December 16.



Meals and Food-Related Events:

- ◆ Invite others to your home, notifying guests in advance of foods that are off-limits in your home.
- ◆ If you are attending a party at someone else's home, bring safe foods for your child.
- ◆ For buffets, plan on an early visit, and then leave when it's time for people to wander with plates of food.
- ◆ Make homemade cookies safe for your child and do a cookie exchange with other food allergy families or friends that you trust.
- ◆ Dress your child in KFA "Don't Feed Me" clothing.
- ◆ Wear infants in slings to prevent well-meaning "sharing."
- ◆ Have your children with contact allergies wear gloves or socks on their hands if they are too little, to keep them from having allergic reactions.
- ◆ For younger children, use a high chair or booster seat with a tray if child's allergens are being served.
- ◆ Closely monitor your allergic child to prevent accidental exposures.



School-Related Activities

- ◆ Speak to the teacher early and write up a "safe" list of foods for the holiday season. Request that the teacher send this home asking that parents not to send any other foods to school as gifts or for parties.
- ◆ Or provide safe food and drinks just for your child.
- ◆ Volunteer to help at the annual winter party.
- ◆ Request that "Secret Santa" or "Polyanna" gifts are non-food related. Ask the teacher to double check your child's before he or she opens it.
- ◆ Ornaments and wreaths can be made out of artificial foliage, available in holiday or craft stores, rather than live plants or evergreens.
- ◆ Bread dough ornaments can be made from clay.



- ◆ Gingerbread houses can be made using:
 - ◇ Foam sheets and other arts and crafts materials such as wooden shapes, and glitter markers; colored glue can be used as the “icing.”
 - ◇ Self-hardening clay of different colors.
 - ◇ Safe recipes at the end of this booklet.
- ◆ Bird houses can be made from wood and decorated to look like a gingerbread house or Santa’s workshop.
- ◆ Pine cone bird feeders can be made using ingredients safe for your child. Soy nut butter, sunflower butter, shortening, or honey can be substituted for peanut butter. Help select a seed alternative that is free of nut or wheat contamination, or use oatmeal instead if that is a safe alternative.
- ◆ Picture frames can be made with painted puzzle pieces instead of pasta.
- ◆ Jewelry can be made with beads instead of noodles.

SAFE EATS FOR CHRISTMAS

Gingerbread House Frosting Created by Heidi B

1 cup powdered sugar
1 Tbsp shortening
3 Tbsp cream of tartar
1 1/2 Tbsp xanthan gum
water (add slowly!)

Mix all in the food processor until desired thickness is reached.



Use dairy, egg, soy, corn, wheat and/or gluten free ingredients as needed.

>>Can be made free of...

Milk, Peanut, Egg, Soy, Tree nut, Corn, Gluten, Wheat, Fish, Shellfish, Sesame

SAFE EATS FOR CHRISTMAS

HOMEMADE CANDY CANES

Created by Ali (Alex's Mom)

1 1/2 cups sugar

1/2 cup water

Heat the water in saucepan over medium-high heat.

Stir until it boils. Leave until it reaches 300 degrees.*.

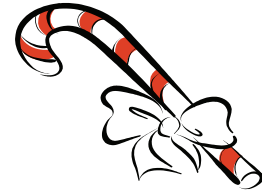
Remove from heat and pour into Candy Cane shapes.**

Let it dry until hard.

If your child can tolerate food coloring, you can color the sugar before putting them in the shapes.

* You will need a candy thermometer

** The chocolate candy molds are not strong enough for making sugar candies. You will need to buy ones specifically for making sugar candies.



>>Can be made free of...

Milk, Peanut, Egg, Soy, Tree nut,
Corn, Gluten, Wheat, Fish,
Shellfish, Sesame and all food
proteins.

RICE NOG

Created by Heidi B

1 cup gluten-free rice milk

Pinch cinnamon

Pinch nutmeg

Dash vanilla

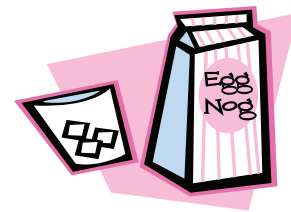
Pinch or 2 of xanthan gum

1 whole clove

Warm everything together except xanthan gum. Stir with a fork. Add xanthan gum, and warm again, mixing well. Bring to a small boil until it slightly thickens and spices are well mixed throughout the mixture.

Pour into coffee cup and chill.

Makes one serving.



>>Can be made free
of...

Milk, Peanut, Egg, Soy, Tree
nut, Corn, Gluten, Wheat,
Fish, Shellfish, Sesame

GLUTEN FREE GINGERBREAD COOKIES

Created by Kathy Pryzwara

- 3/4 cup milk free, soy free, corn free margarine
- 1/4 cup unsulphured molasses
- 1 cup light brown sugar
- 3 cups Kathy P's Brown rice flour mix*
- 1 tsp xanthan gum
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 Tbsp baking powder
- 2 tsp ginger
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup water
- sweet rice flour for rolling



>>Can be made free of...

Milk, Peanut, Egg, Soy, Tree
nut, Corn, Gluten, Wheat,
Fish, Shellfish, Sesame

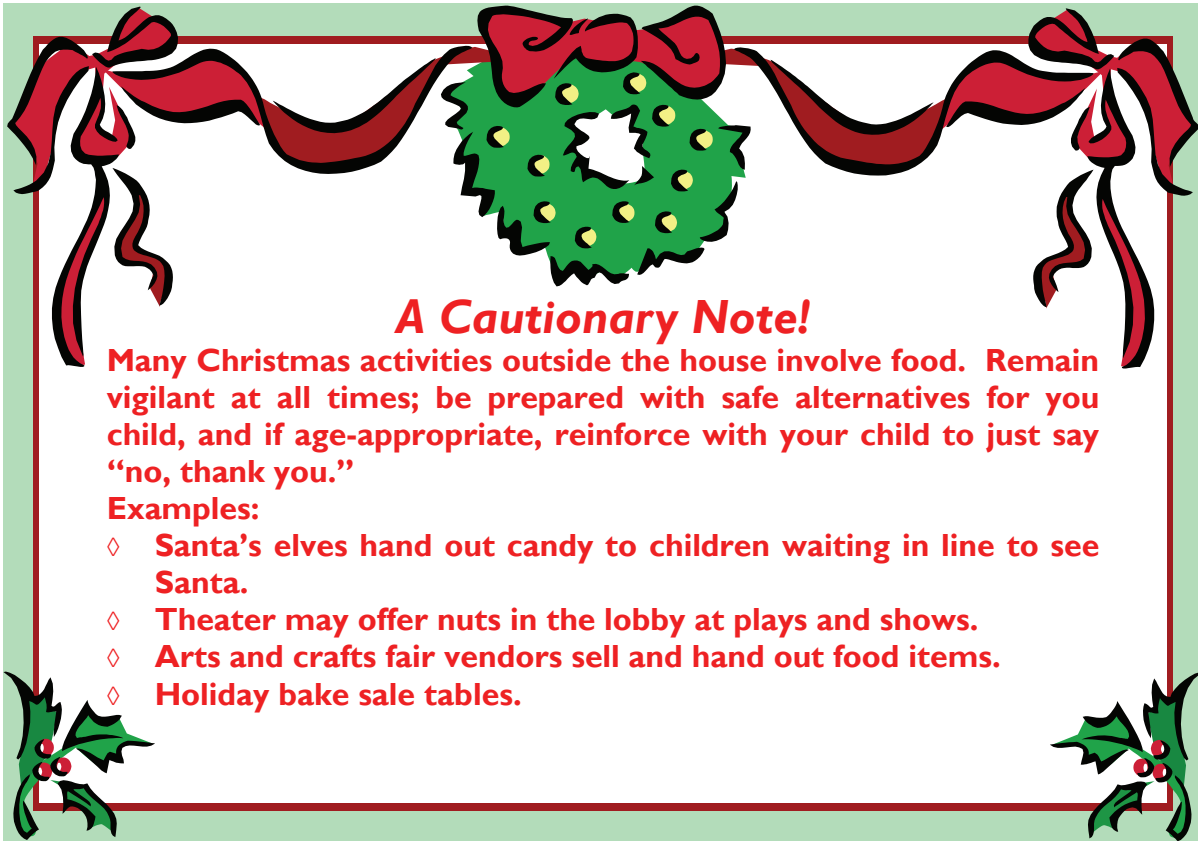
Cream margarine and sugar. Beat in molasses. Sift dry ingredients into separate bowl. Stir into creamed mixture alternately with water. Mix thoroughly once everything has been added. Dough should be soft and will be sticky. Refrigerate dough for at least one hour. Using sweet rice flour, roll portions of dough on plastic wrap or parchment paper to about 1/4". Cut and decorate as desired. Bake in oven at 350 degrees F for 8-20 minutes depending on size. Cookies should just be getting browned. Bake longer for crispier cookies. Cool slightly on sheet before removing to rack to cool completely. Store in airtight containers. Use dairy, soy, egg, corn, wheat and/or gluten free ingredients as needed.

*Kathy P's Brown Rice Flour Mix

- 1 cup Brown Rice Flour
- 1 1/4 cup white rice flour
- 1/4 cup potato starch
- 2/3 cup tapioca starch
- 3/4 cup sweet rice flour
- 1/3 cup arrowroot starch
- 2 tsp xanthan gum

Sift together twice and mix well. Store in airtight container.

Stir or sift before use.



A Cautionary Note!

Many Christmas activities outside the house involve food. Remain vigilant at all times; be prepared with safe alternatives for you child, and if age-appropriate, reinforce with your child to just say "no, thank you."

Examples:

- ◇ **Santa's elves hand out candy to children waiting in line to see Santa.**
- ◇ **Theater may offer nuts in the lobby at plays and shows.**
- ◇ **Arts and crafts fair vendors sell and hand out food items.**
- ◇ **Holiday bake sale tables.**

SPECIAL THANKS

Yael Weinstein, KFA Education Materials Coordinator
Volunteers & Members of Kids with Food Allergies, Inc.

Megan Ryan

RESOURCES FOR THIS BROCHURE

Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas>

About.com <http://familycrafts.about.com/od/christmascrafts/>



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A World of Support

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