

Tips to Safely Celebrate Chanukah with Food Allergies

Written in collaboration with Linda Coss and Yael Weinstein, MA.



TAKE ALL FOOD ALLERGIES SERIOUSLY ▪
TRACE AMOUNTS OF FOOD CAN CAUSE A REACTION

Chanukah at Home

Chanukah is a fun and exciting holiday for children. Children look forward to the candles, games, gifts, parties and fun. But because Chanukah celebrations often involve food, it takes extra planning to make sure that everyone has a safe and happy holiday.

There are many ways your family can safely celebrate Chanukah while also being mindful of your food allergies. You might want to plan to do a different craft or activity on each night of Chanukah. For example, you can play dreidel and sing Chanukah songs. Plus, here are some other fun ideas: Consider hosting a party at your home. If you choose to serve food, this will give you the control to only serve food that is safe for everyone. Check KFA's Safe Eats™ recipes for a variety of allergy-friendly options.

Celebrate Chanukah with Your Family

Make a felt Chanukah menorah. Young children who cannot yet light candles will enjoy being able to “light” their own special menorah each night.

Make Chanukah cards. Get out a variety of arts and crafts materials—such as colorful paper, wrapping paper scraps, rubber stamps, markers, glitter glue, etc.—and have your kids make homemade cards for your friends and family.

Make beeswax candles. Buy candle wick string and sheets of beeswax at a craft store. Cut a 2-1/2-inch-long piece of wick for each candle. Cut a 2 inch by 2 inch square of beeswax for each candle. Wrap the wax tightly around the wick. Use firm pressure as you roll the candle up. Be sure to keep the bottom edge even so that the candle will stand up. Once you get to the end of the candle, press the edge firmly into the rest of the candle to stop it from unrolling.

Listen to Chanukah music. There are many wonderful Chanukah CDs available, including many meant for specific age groups. Sing along to the music and dance around the house!

Decorate the house. Have your kids help you make Chanukah decorations and hang them up around your house. You can also use large pieces of paper to make Chanukah placemats for “decorating” the kitchen table.

Buy gifts for the needy. On at least one night of Chanukah, do not give gifts to your children. Make it a tradition to go out as a family that night to buy holiday gifts for children whose families cannot afford to buy presents.

Read Chanukah books together. There are many books to choose from for different ages and reading levels.

Cook Chanukah food. Make allergen-free versions of traditional Chanukah foods, such as latkes (potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly donuts).

Making and decorating Chanukah-shaped cookies is also fun. Search the KFA recipe collection for possible recipes.

PROUDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY



For more detailed information and a list of resources, please visit KidsWithFoodAllergies.org.
Copyright ©2015, Kids With Food Allergies, a division of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), all rights reserved.

Page 1 of 2
Rev. December 2016

Chanukah at School & Synagogue

If your child attends a public school, Chanukah may not be celebrated. Some public schools include Chanukah as part of a “winter holidays” celebration. However, Chanukah is always observed at Jewish day schools and supplementary religious schools. Plus, most synagogues host Chanukah parties for the entire congregation.

If your child’s school chooses to celebrate Chanukah, here are some tips for ensuring that it is safe and fun for everyone.

Parents: Talk with the teacher in advance about making the celebration safe and inclusive for your child. Start this conversation early and with a written plan.

Teachers: Please do not allow children with food allergies to share food. Foods from others may be a source of unintended allergen exposure. The CDC recommends the use of non-food rewards when possible. This promotes inclusiveness in the classroom. It also decreases the risk that a student could be exposed to an allergen. Celebrating without sugary, high-fat foods and sweets is also healthier and consistent with the wellness policies in place in many schools.

Chanukah-Themed Crafts and Games

- Make dreidels out of wood, clay, paper or foam sheets
- Make Chanukah menorahs (Chanukiahs) out of clay, metal or wood with screw nuts
- Play the dreidel game, using pennies for game pieces (instead of peanuts or other food items)
- Challenge the class to see how many dreidels they can get spinning at the same time
- Play “Pin the Candle on the Menorah”



More Fun Ways to Celebrate!

MUSIC. Sing Chanukah songs, such as “I Have a Little Dreidel,” “Chanukah, Chanukah,” “Chanukah, Oh Chanukah,” and “I’m a Latke.”

STORYTELLING. Read Chanukah books to the class using silly voices for each character.

DRAMA. Have students work in small groups to write short skits about Chanukah. Act them out for the rest of the class.

WORD GAMES. Each player is given a piece of paper with a Chanukah word. He or she must then use words (not charades) to get their team members to guess what that Chanukah word is. Possible Chanukah words to use include menorah, dreidel, latkes, Maccabees, candles, miracles, temple, Judah, King Antiochus, and Greeks.

WRITING. Write a creative story about miracles. You can have each student write their own story, or work together as a class.

DISCUSSION. Chanukah tells the story of a battle for religious freedom. Explain that it was common in ancient times for new rulers to demand that everyone needs to pay tribute to their god. How would the students feel if this were the case today? What does religious freedom mean for them?

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional ideas on school celebrations, see KFA’s list of non-food rewards.

KidsWithFoodAllergies.org | AAFA.org

PROUDLY BROUGHT TO YOU BY



For more detailed information and a list of resources, please visit KidsWithFoodAllergies.org. Copyright ©2015, Kids With Food Allergies, a division of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), all rights reserved.

Page 2 of 2
Rev. December 2016