

A Guide to Managing **TREE NUT ALLERGY**



Tree nut allergy is a common allergy among children and adults. About 0.5 to 1% of people in the U.S. have a tree nut allergy.¹

What Are Symptoms of a Nut Allergy?

When you have a nut allergy, you need to be aware of the symptoms of anaphylaxis. Symptoms of anaphylaxis may include hives, vomiting, or trouble breathing. The treatment for anaphylaxis is injectable epinephrine.

Common signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis in children, teens, and adults:

- Skin rash, itching, hives
- Swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat
- Shortness of breath, trouble breathing, wheezing (whistling sound during breathing)
- Stomach pain, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Uterine cramps
- Feeling like something awful is about to happen

Common signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis in infants and toddlers:²

- Skin rash, itching, hives
- Swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat; ear pulling, scratching or putting fingers in ears; tongue thrusting or pulling
- Coughing, wheezing, hoarse cry, noisy breathing, chest or neck tugging, nostril flaring
- Stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, spitting up, hiccups
- Arching back, bringing knees to the chest
- Rubbing eyes, itchy or red eyes

How Can I Prevent Nut Allergy Reactions?

Tree nuts are common in foods such as cereals, granola, desserts, cookies, candies, sauces, baked goods, and breads. They are also common in plant-based and vegan foods (for example, milk-free cheese can contain cashew).

The only way to avoid an allergic reaction is to remove the tree nuts your child is allergic to from their diet. You can successfully manage your nut allergy.

What you can do:

- Work with your doctor
- Read labels
- Be aware of cross-contact (when foods come into contact with each other and may transfer an allergen into a food that shouldn't have it)
- Clear communication with school staff, people who prepare your child's food, and babysitters and other caregivers

Reading Labels

By law, food companies must label their products clearly if they contain nuts. The law requires companies to name the specific type of nut on the label.

When reading labels for nuts, it may be in parentheses after an ingredient in the ingredient list. It could also be in a statement under the ingredient list. Sometimes it will be in bold.

For example:

- Tree nuts (almond)
- Contains: pistachio

Sometimes nuts may appear in **bold** print in the ingredient list too. To avoid nuts in foods and other products, it helps to learn the different names of nuts.

Some foods and products do not have to follow the allergy label law and may contain nuts:

- Arts and crafts supplies
- Prescription and over-the-counter drugs
- Cosmetics and personal care items (such as, makeup, lotions, and soaps)
- Alcohol
- Toys
- Pet food
- Food served in restaurants, cafeterias, or by other food service providers

Most states in the U.S. do not have regulations regarding food allergies and restaurants. Ingredients in restaurant foods may vary. Cross-contact is also more likely. Look for places that have food allergy policies and allergy menus. Give the staff a chef card that alerts them to your allergy and lists tree nuts.



If a food item does not have a label, you can't read it, or you have any doubts, don't eat it. Always read the entire label every time. Food companies may change their recipes.

Does My Child Need to Avoid All Nuts?

Some tree nuts are closely related, so if your child is allergic to one, there is a higher chance they are allergic to a related nut. Cashew and pistachios are related. Pecans and walnuts are related as well. Cross-reactivity occurs when the proteins in one food are similar to the proteins in another. When that happens, the body's immune system sees them as the same.



Kids with Food Allergies has many resources to help you manage food allergies. Search our Safe Eats® Allergy-Friendly Recipes Collection of almost 1,500 member-submitted recipes at: kidswithfoodallergies.org/recipes

Most people who are allergic to one tree nut are not allergic to all tree nuts. But your child's doctor may recommend they avoid all tree nuts if they are allergic to one or more tree nuts. They may also recommend they avoid peanuts. Young children may have a hard time telling the difference between different nuts. It is also because it's common for nuts to come in contact with other types of nuts during food processing. Your doctor may also recommend that your child not avoid foods unnecessarily. Eating varied foods, including nuts, supports good nutrition and may prevent a new allergy from developing.

Each person's allergy and dietary needs are different. Ask your allergist if other nuts should be included or avoided in your child's diet.

References

1. Everything You Need to Know About Tree Nut Allergy. (2020, September 28). American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. <https://www.aaaai.org/tools-for-the-public/conditions-library/allergies/everything-you-need-to-know-about-tree-nut-allergy>
2. Pistiner, M., Mendez-Reyes, J. E., Eftekhari, S., Carver, M., Lieberman, J., Wang, J., & Camargo, C. A. (2021). Caregiver-reported presentation of severe food-induced allergic reactions in infants and toddlers. *The Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology: In Practice*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaip.2020.11.005>
3. Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. (2018). Guidance on FAQs on Food Allergens. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. <https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/guidance-industry-questions-and-answers-regarding-food-allergens-edition-4>



Will My Child Outgrow Their Nut Allergy?

Around 10% of children outgrow their tree nut allergy.³ But for some people, a nut allergy can be lifelong.



Is There a Treatment for Nut Allergy?

Many allergists have been offering OIT treatment using foods in various forms, such as a liquid, flour, or the actual food itself. These methods are not approved by the FDA. Talk with your child's allergist about the most appropriate OIT option for your child. The FDA is looking at other food allergy treatments to fast track through the approval process to address this unmet need in the food allergy community.



Sign up for KFA's community to stay up to date on tree nut allergy news: kidswithfoodallergies.org/join



TREE NUT INGREDIENT LIST



Tree nuts can appear on food labels under many different names. To avoid tree nuts in foods and other products, it helps to learn the different names of tree nuts. If you see these ingredients on a label or menu, it means it contains tree nut protein and is not safe for someone with tree nut allergy. If the product is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the common tree nut name must appear on the label.

Complete List of Nut Names (Botanical Names and Derivatives)

Almond – *Prunus dulcis* (Rosaceae), marzipan (almond paste)

Beech nut – *Fagus* spp. (Fagaceae)

Brazil nut – *Bertholletia excelsa* (Lecythidaceae)

Butternut – *Juglans cinerea* (Juglandaceae), *Juglans* spp. (Juglandaceae), white walnut, related to walnut and heartnut

Cashew – *Anacardium* nuts, *Anacardium occidentale* (Anacardiaceae)

Chestnut (Chinese, American, European, Seguin) – *Castanea* spp. (Fagaceae)

Chinquapin – *Castanea pumila* (Fagaceae)

Coconut* – *Cocos nucifera* L. (Arecaceae (alt. Palmae))

Filbert – *Corylus* spp. (Betulaceae), hazelnut

Ginkgo nut – *Ginkgo biloba* L. (Ginkgoaceae)

Hazelnut – *Corylus* spp. (Betulaceae), filbert, Nutella®, gianduja

Heartnut – *Juglans* spp. (Juglandaceae), Japanese walnut, related to walnut and butternut

Hickory nut – *Carya* spp. (Juglandaceae)

Lichee nut – Lychee nut, Litchi chinensis Sonn. Sapindaceae

Macadamia nut – *Macadamia* spp. (Proteaceae), bush nut, Queensland nut, maroochi nut, bauple nut, Hawaii nut

Pecan – *Carya illinoensis* (Juglandaceae)

Pili nut – *Canarium ovatum* Engl. in A. DC. (Burseraceae)

Pine nut/piñon nut – *Pinus* spp. (Pineaceae), Indian nut, piñon nut, pinyon nut, pigndi nut, pignolia nut, pignon nuts, caponata, pesto

Pistachio – *Pistacia vera* L. (Anacardiaceae)

Shea nut** – *Vitellaria paradoxa* C.F. Gaertn. (Sapotaceae), karite

Walnut (English, Persian, Black, Japanese, California) – *Juglans* spp. (Juglandaceae), related to butternut and heartnut

May Contain a Variety of Nuts

Mandelonas – peanuts soaked in almond, pecan, walnut, or other nut flavoring shaped to look like other nuts, Nut-Nuts®, artificial nuts, fake nuts, faux nuts

Mashuga nuts – spiced nuts

Mixed nuts

Natural nut extract – for example, almond extract

Nougat

Nut butters – for example, almond butter, hazelnut butter, Brazil nut butter, macadamia nut butter, pistachio nut butter, karite butter, as well as other nut butters

Nut meal

Nutmeat

Nut oil – for example, walnut oil, as well as other nut oils

Nut paste

Nut pieces

Pralines – usually made with pecans but can be made with other nuts

Nuts Are Sometimes Found in

Artificial flavoring

Baked goods

Desserts

Mortadella

Natural flavoring

Nougat

Pesto

Trail mix

Vegetable oils

However, if the product is an FDA-regulated food, the common tree nut name must appear on the label.

*Coconut – The FDA lists coconut as a tree nut. In fact, coconut is a seed of a drupaceous fruit. Most people allergic to tree nuts can safely eat coconut. Coconut allergy is rare. If you are allergic to tree nuts, talk with your allergist before removing coconut from your diet.

**Shea nut/shear butter – The FDA lists shea nut to be a tree nut. But studies have shown that a shea nut allergy is rare.



TREE NUT ALLERGY Chef Cards

Take all food allergies seriously. • Read all ingredient labels.

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When you eat out, use these chef cards to let the restaurant staff know how to help you avoid allergic reactions to tree nut.

CUT

I have a tree nut allergy!
I must avoid all foods that contain tree nut.

Contains Nuts

Almond	Chinquapin	Pili nut
Beech nut	Coconut*	Pine nut
Brazil nut	Filbert	Pinon nut
Bush nut	Ginko nut	Pistachio
Butternut	Hazelnut	Shea nut**
Cashew	Hickory nut	Walnut (English, Persian, Black, Japanese, California)
Chestnut (Chinese, American, European, Seguin)	Lichee nut	
	Macadamia nut	
	Pecan	

Nuts Are Sometimes Found in

Artificial flavoring	Pesto	Natural nut extract
Baked goods	Trail mix	Nougat
Desserts	Vegetable oils	Nut butters
Mortadella	May Contain a Variety of Nuts	Nut meal
Natural flavoring	Mandelonas	Nutmeat
Nougat	Mashuga nuts	Nut oil
	Mixed nuts	Nut paste
		Nut pieces
		Pralines

Please check all foods for the ingredients on this card, including cooking oils, marinades, sauces, and seasonings. Use separate and clean utensils, equipment, surfaces, and gloves.

KFA Kids with Food Allergies For more detailed information and a list of resources, please visit: kidswithfoodallergies.org/treenut
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CUT

CHEF: FOOD ALLERGY ALERT

I have food allergies!
In order for me to avoid an allergic reaction, I **must avoid** all food that contain:

<input type="checkbox"/> Milk	<input type="checkbox"/> Egg	Other Allergens: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Peanut	<input type="checkbox"/> Tree Nuts	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Wheat	<input type="checkbox"/> Gluten	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Sesame	<input type="checkbox"/> Soy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish	<input type="checkbox"/> Shellfish	_____

Before preparing my food, please take these steps to help keep me safe. I appreciate you!

- Read labels to look for the allergens listed on the front of this card. Please check all foods including cooking oils, marinades, sauces and seasonings.
- Please use separate and clean utensils, equipment and surfaces to prepare my meal.
- Wash hands with soapy water and change gloves.

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