

# 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.<sup>1</sup>

## What Are Symptoms of a Nut Allergy?

When you have a tree nut allergy, you need to be aware of the symptoms of anaphylaxis. Symptoms of anaphylaxis may include hives, vomiting, or trouble breathing. The first-line treatment for anaphylaxis is 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:<sup>2</sup>

- Skin rash, itching, hives
- Swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat
- Stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, spitting up
- Tongue thrusting, tongue pulling, licking lips repeatedly, ear pulling
- Arching back, bringing knees to the chest
- Coughing, wheezing, hoarse voice, belly breathing, chest or neck “tugging”
- Rubbing eyes, itchy or red eyes



Kids with Food Allergies  
Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America

## How Can I Prevent Tree 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 tree 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 tree nuts. The law requires companies to name the specific type of tree nut on the label.

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

Some foods and products do not have to follow the allergy label law and may contain tree 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 Tree 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 tree 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](https://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 Tree Nut Allergy?

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



## Is There a Treatment for Tree 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. The FDA has approved Xolair® (omalizumab) for the treatment of food allergies. It is a biologic medicine that may reduce your child's risk of an allergic reaction if they accidentally eat their food allergen.



Sign up for KFA's community to stay up to date on tree nut allergy news: [kidswithfoodallergies.org/join](https://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 Tree Nut Names (Botanical Names and Derivatives)

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

**Black walnut** – *Juglans nigra* L. (Juglandaceae)

**Brazil nut** – *Bertholletia excelsa* Humb. & Bonpl. (Lecythidaceae)

**California walnut** – *Juglans californica* S. Watson (Juglandaceae)

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

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

**Heartnut/Japanese walnut** – *Juglans ailantifolia* Carriere var. *cordiformis* (Makino) Rehder (Juglandaceae), related to walnut and butternut

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

**Pecan** – *Carya illinoensis* (Wangenh.) K. Koch (Juglandaceae)

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

**Pistachio** – *Pistacia vera* L. (Anacardiaceae)

**Walnut (English, Persian)** – *Juglans regia* L. (Juglandaceae), related to butternut and heartnut

## May Contain a Variety of Tree 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

## Tree Nuts Are Sometimes Found in

**Artificial flavoring**

**Baked goods**

**Desserts**

**Mortadella**

**Natural flavoring**

**Nougat**

**Pesto**

**Trail mix**

**Vegetable oils**



For more information and other resources, please visit: [kidswithfoodallergies.org/treenut](https://kidswithfoodallergies.org/treenut)

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# 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.

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

### Contains Tree Nuts

Almond	Macadamia nut (bush nut, Queensland nut, maroochi nut, bauple nut, Hawaii nut)
Black walnut	
Brazil nut	
California walnut	Pecan
Cashew	Pine nut/pinon nut
Filbert/hazelnut	Pistachio
Heartnut/Japanese walnut	Walnut (English, Persian)

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Artificial flavoring  
Baked goods  
Desserts  
Mortadella  
Natural flavoring  
Nougat

Pesto  
Trail mix  
Vegetable oils  
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Mashuga nuts  
Mixed nuts

Natural nut extract  
Nougat  
Nut butters  
Nut meal  
Nutmeat  
Nut oil  
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.



For more detailed information and a list of resources, please visit: [kidswithfoodallergies.org/treenut](https://kidswithfoodallergies.org/treenut)

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## 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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