



Managing Allergies & Intolerances

Food allergies are the abnormal reactions that can happen in our body when specific foods alert our immune system. While people can be allergic to any type of food, the most common allergens (reaction-causing foods) across the world are: milk, eggs, shellfish, fish, peanuts and tree nuts, wheat, soy, sesame and mustard.

Symptoms from food allergens can range from mild itchiness to more severe, life-threatening reactions like anaphylaxis. As a result, people with allergies often need to avoid these foods and can miss out on the valuable nutrients they have to offer. Fortunately, there are alternatives that can provide similar nutrition benefits, or similar effects in the dishes we make.



Milk

Food Sources

- Butter, Buttermilk
- Cheese, curds
- Cream, ice cream, custard
- Ghee and butter fat
- Sour cream
- Yogurt
- Kefir (milk drink)
- Kumiss (fermented milk drink)

Keep an eye out for these ingredients!

- Casein, lactalbumin, lactoferrin, lactoglobulin, lactose, lactulose, recaldent, rennet casein, tagatose, whey

Nutrition and Alternatives

Milk and dairy products are an important source of calcium and are often fortified with vitamin D for our bone health. They are also sources of protein, phosphorus, potassium, and vitamins A, B2, and B12.

Possible Alternatives

FOR NUTRITION

- Fortified soy, rice, coconut, hemp or almond beverage
- Often fortified with calcium and vitamins A, B2, B12 and D. They tend to be lower in protein than milk, so aim for an extra serving of a different protein!

FOR FOODS AND DISHES

- Cheese/yogurt/desserts → vegan alternatives
- Buttermilk → 1 tbsp (15 mL) vinegar or lemon juice + 1 cup (250 mL) soy beverage
- Yogurt → silken tofu, pureed or blended
- Butter → vegetable oils, dairy-free non-hydrogenated margarine



Eggs

Food Sources

- Breads and baked goods
- Batter-fried foods
- Ice cream
- Mayonnaise
- Pasta
- Pancakes, waffles, crepes
- Quiche
- Eggnog
- Meringue

Keep an eye out for these ingredients!

- Albumin, globulin, lecithin, lysozyme, ovalbumin, ovomitinellin

Nutrition and Alternatives

Eggs are a high-quality source of protein and can be enriched with healthy omega-3 fats for heart health. They're rich in selenium, choline, and vitamins A, B12, D and E.

Possible Alternatives

FOR NUTRITION

- Meats, poultry and fish
- Great sources of protein, iron and B12

- Beans and seeds
- Sources of protein, iron, potassium and magnesium

FOR FOODS AND DISHES

- Egg replacer, 3 tbsp (45 mL) aquafaba (liquid from canned chickpeas)
- Moisture → ¼ cup applesauce, ¼ cup pureed silken tofu, ¼ cup vegetable/milk/yogurt
- Binding → ¼ cup mashed banana/avocado, 3 tbsp (45 mL) smooth nut-free butter, 1 tbsp (15 mL) ground flax or chia seed + 3 tbsp (45 mL) warm water
- Leavening → 1 tbsp (15 mL) apple cider vinegar + 1 tsp (5 mL) baking soda



Shellfish (Crustaceans & Molluscs)

Food Sources

- Crustaceans (crayfish, crab, prawn, lobster, shrimp)
- Molluscs (clams, mussels, scallops, oysters, abalone, sea snail, octopus, squid, etc.)

Nutrition and Alternatives

Shellfish are a source of protein, iron, copper, zinc, vitamin B12 and selenium. Some types of shellfish are also good sources of healthy omega-3 fats.

Possible Alternatives

FOR NUTRITION

- Skinless chicken and turkey
- Almost as lean, but equally rich in protein, iron and vitamin B12

- Beans
- Sources of protein and iron

FOR FOODS AND DISHES

- Texture → hearts of palm, mushrooms (oyster, king oyster), jackfruit, seitan
- Flavour → soy sauce, mushrooms, mushroom sauce, seaweed/kelp



Fish

Food Sources

- Anchovy, basa, bass, carp, catfish, cod, eel, haddock, halibut, herring, mackerel, pollock, salmon, sardine, smelt, sole, tilapia, trout, tuna, white fish, etc.
- Sushi, surimi (imitation crab), kamaboko
- Salad dressings, sauces
- Gelatin, marshmallows (kosher, halal)

Keep an eye out for these ingredients!

- Fish stock, seafood flavouring

Nutrition and Alternatives

Fish are high-quality proteins and certain fish are unique sources of omega-3s. They can also be rich in calcium, phosphorus, zinc, iodine, magnesium, potassium, and vitamins D and B2.

Possible Alternatives

FOR NUTRITION

- Meat, poultry, beans and seeds
Sources of protein, iron, and vitamin B12
- Enriched eggs, seaweed, fortified margarines
Source of omega-3s

FOR FOODS AND DISHES

- Texture → chicken
- Seafood taste → “Old Bay” seasoning blend



Peanuts, Tree nuts

Food Sources

- Tree nuts include: cashews, almonds, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts, Brazil nuts, etc.)
- Baked goods, granola bars, nougat
- Cocoa-based/nut-based spreads, marzipan
- Asian cuisines (Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai, Indian, Chinese, Cambodian)

Nutrition and Alternatives

Different nuts have different types of nutrients however, most are packed with healthy unsaturated fats, fibre, vitamins and important minerals.

Possible Alternatives

FOR NUTRITION, FOODS AND DISHES

- Seeds and seed butters (pumpkin, flax, sunflower)
Sources of protein, iron, potassium, magnesium and healthy oils— with added crunch!



Wheat

Food Sources

- Breads, pasta, wheat-based cereals and flour, pizza crust
- Atta, barley, bran, bulgur, couscous, durum, emmer, farina, fu, kamut, matzoh, seitan, semolina, spelt (dinkel, farro), triticale
- Cookies, crackers, donuts, muffins, pancakes, waffles, batter-fried foods
- Salad dressings and sauces (gravy, soy sauce, chutney, ketchup, mustard)

Keep an eye out for these ingredients!

Hydrolyzed plant protein, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, vegetable gum, vegetable starch

Nutrition and Alternatives

Wheat is a source of fibre, B vitamins, and minerals such as potassium, phosphorus, zinc, etc.

Possible Alternatives

FOR NUTRITION

- Brown rice, quinoa, corn, wheat-free oats, buckwheat, millet, amaranth, chia

Whole grains are good sources of carbohydrates, fibre, B vitamins and minerals

FOR FOODS AND DISHES

- Wheat Flour (1 cup/250 mL) → 1 cup tapioca flour, 1 cup millet flour, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup potato flour
- Thickening → 1 tbsp (15 mL) tapioca flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp (7 mL) cornstarch, $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp (7 mL) potato flour/starch
- Pasta/Couscous → gluten-free pasta, rice vermicelli, quinoa, rice



Soy

Food Sources

- Edamame, soybean, natto
- Tofu, tempeh, bean curd, yuba
- Miso, soy sauce, teriyaki sauce, tamari, soybean paste
- Meat, cheese and dairy substitutes (soy milk, ice cream and yogurt)

Keep an eye out for these ingredients!

Textured vegetable protein, vegetable gums/starches, soy protein isolate/concentrate

Nutrition and Alternatives

Soy and soy products are plant-based options for quality protein while also providing iron, fibre, zinc, calcium, and B vitamins. Soy beverages also tend to be fortified with vitamin D and calcium.

Possible Alternatives

FOR NUTRITION

- Dairy milk, hemp milk

Similar protein content to soy milk

- Lentils and beans (kidney beans, chickpeas, pinto beans, black beans)

Sources of protein, iron, magnesium and potassium

FOR FOODS AND DISHES

- Soybeans → fava beans, lima beans, green peas
- Beverage → cow's milk, other plant-based beverages (rice or almond milk)
- Cooking oil → canola oil, butter
- Soy sauce → ume plum vinegar, coconut aminos, olive brine



Sesame

Food Sources

- Bread (burger buns, cereals, crackers, muesli, melba toast)
- Dips (hummus), pastes (hummus, chutney, tahini)
- Sesame oil
- Tempeh, vegetarian burgers
- Snack bars (protein bars, granola bars)

Keep an eye out for these ingredients!

Tahini, gingelly, gingelly oil, benne, benne seed, sesamol, sim sim, etc.

Nutrition and Alternatives

Though sesame seeds are small, they're a very concentrated source of healthy fats, fibre, protein, vitamin E, and minerals like calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron, selenium, zinc and copper.

Possible Alternatives

FOR NUTRITION

- Other seeds (flax, pumpkin, chia, sunflower)
Source of fibre, protein, healthy fats and minerals
- Similar oils (olive, canola, sunflower)

FOR FOODS AND DISHES

- Baked goods (topping) → poppy seeds, ground pumpkin seeds, ground sunflower seeds



Mustard

Food Sources

- Condiments, salad dressings, sauces
- Spices, flavourings or seasonings
- Dehydrated soups
- Curries, chutneys
- Pickles, pickled products
- Potato salad

Nutrition and Alternatives

Mustard is a low-calorie and low-fat condiment, though is not necessarily rich in valuable nutrients. It is mainly used to add flavour to foods.

Possible Alternatives

FOR FOODS AND DISHES

- Shallot, jalapeno, serrano pepper, pinch of cayenne
Adds a slight kick and punch of flavour



Sulphites

Sulphites are additives commonly used to preserve shelf-life/potency of foods and certain medications, prevent the growth of harmful bacteria, and produce some food packaging materials.

While they are not 'true' food allergens, Health Canada includes sulphites in this list of common allergens because it may lead to allergy-like symptoms in some people.

Food Sources

CANNED, FROZEN OR DRIED FOOD ITEMS

- Dried fruits and vegetables (coconut, raisins, apricot, sweet potato, mango)
- Canned/frozen fruits and vegetables
- Dried herbs, spices and teas
- Tomato paste, pulp, and puree
- Dehydrated, mashed, peeled and pre-cut potatoes
- Frozen french fries

CONDIMENTS, PRESERVES AND SWEETENERS

- Ketchup, mustard, relish
- Coleslaw, horseradish, sauerkraut, pickles
- Sugar syrups (corn syrup, table syrup, dextrose syrup, glucose solids)
- Fruit fillings and syrups, jam, jellies, marmalades, pectin, molasses, gelatin
- Glazed and candied fruits (e.g. maraschino cherries)

BEVERAGES

- Bottled lemon and lime juice/concentrate
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beer and cider
- Fruit and vegetable juices
- Wine

OTHER

- Fresh grapes
- Cereal, cornmeal, cornstarch, crackers, muesli

Other possible sources of sulphites to be mindful of include:

- Snack foods – raisins, granola bars (with dried fruit), fruit salad
- Fish, crustaceans, molluscs
- Moodle and rice mixes
- Soy products
- Dressings, gravies, sauces, soup, soup mixes, guacamole
- Deli meats, hot dogs, and sausages
- Baked goods (especially with fruit)

Regardless of the Allergy...

1. Be mindful of cross-contamination. This is the accidental transfer of an ingredient on a food or surface through shared equipment such as cutting boards, cooking utensils, toasters, and even through hands!

2. Reading the ingredient list every time you shop is a must. Keep an eye out for ingredients hinting that the product may not be safe for you to consume.

Avoid any products that say "CONTAINS" or "MAY CONTAIN" your specific allergen(s) – especially if you do not have an auto-injector (EpiPen®). If you don't recognize any ingredients or there's no ingredient list, avoid the product altogether for your safety.

3. Communicate! If you're dining out, choose places with food allergy policies, and be sure to inform food handlers

For more information, visit foodallergycanada.ca/allergies