

Keeping your health and wellbeing in the know

MyHealthTALK

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Courtesy of Asset Health



SNACK ATTACK

A look at the most common childhood food allergies

Eggs

Eggs are a particularly difficult food to avoid, so it takes a keen eye to find egg ingredients on package labels. Certain grocery items that typically contain eggs include baked goods and desserts (no surprise there), but some soups, salad dressings, sauces and beverages also use eggs. Even some egg substitutes use the very ingredient they are developed to replace.



Milk

A milk allergy and lactose intolerance are not the same. Those with a lactose intolerance may experience discomfort after eating food that was prepared with milk, but those with the food allergy can experience much more severe reactions. It's not always easy to determine which foods include milk, from butter and margarine, cheese, ice cream, sour cream and yogurt (including frozen yogurt), to the more subtle items such as canned fish, chocolate, processed meats, salad dressings and even seasoned french fries.



Peanuts and tree nuts

Did you know that peanuts are actually a legume and not a nut, as their name suggests? Tree nuts include walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, cashews, pistachios and Brazil nuts. Peanuts and tree nuts are hidden in a variety of foods ranging from candy bars and baked goods to sandwich spreads, cereals, salad dressings, and even soups (the production of some bouillon involve the use of nuts).

Soy

Soy allergies are most common among newborns and infants, who are fed soy-based formulas, and young children. However, many children outgrow a soy allergy by the age of three or four. Some foods that contain soy are tofu, miso, edamame (or young soybeans cooked in their pod) and protein powders.

Wheat/Gluten

Wheat or gluten allergies can range from a mild intolerance (the occasional upset stomach or diarrhea) to life-threatening reactions. Popular gluten or wheat-laden foods include pastas, bread, tortillas, cookies and cakes, cereals, gravies, sauces and dressings. Some people with very sensitive cases of the allergy even avoid vinegar, which can begin as a gluten grain.

Fish and shellfish

While we have grouped them together, fish and shellfish are separate food allergies. Someone with a shellfish allergy may not have an allergy to other fish, and vice versa. Fish like tuna or cod are common in kid meals, such as fish sticks, but shellfish, like lobster or clams, may be easier to avoid.

How kids often describe allergic reactions:

- "My mouth feels funny."
- "My tongue or mouth is tingling or burning."
- "My tongue or mouth itches."
- "My tongue feels like there is air in it."
- "My tongue feels full."
- "It feels like something is poking my tongue."
- "My lips feel tight."
- "My throat feels thick."
- "There's something stuck in my throat."

"Food Allergies in Schools," www.cdc.gov, Oct. 31 2013.

To learn more and print complete lists of ingredients that contain any of these foods, visit www.kidshealth.org.

"Food Allergy Research & Education: Soy Allergy," foodallergy.org, July 15, 2014.

"Trends in Allergic Conditions Among Children: United States, 1997-2011," Kristen D. Jackson, LaJeana D. Howie, and Lara J. Akinbami, www.cdc.gov, May 2, 2013.

3 Ways to Train like an NFL star:

With the football preseason kicking off Thursday, Aug. 7, add some of these training program cardio and strength exercises to your workout! (Always check with your doctor before starting any new exercise routine.)

Gassers

Offensive and defensive players, and even some coaches will run (or sprint) gassers during seasonal training camps. Gassers entail running from sideline to sideline, or roughly 53 yards, four consecutive times. This can be a doable exercise both on and off the football field and is sure to spice up your workout.

Bounding

This exercise looks a lot like skipping, but with extra oomph! Bounding is a different approach for football players to amplify their natural torque, which comes in handy when it's time to rush the ball! But anyone can add bounding to their fitness regimen, even if it's down the sidewalk. See how far you can go before your legs tire!

Ladder drills

Football players use ladder drills as a way to improve speed and agility. Teams often lay tape on the ground, you guessed it – in the shape of a ladder and do various patterns through it, such as sprinting through the small spaces, alternating foot positions (think hopscotch), or springing side-to-side. You can even set your mock ladder on a hill to intensify your practice. Have fun with it and make your own drills! Have kids? You can always use sidewalk chalk to craft your workout ladder!

"16 Cutting Edge Football Exercises From the Best Players in the NFL," Zac Clark, www.stack.com, Oct. 9, 2013.
"What Is a Gasser CrossFit Football?" www.livestrong.com, May 31, 2011.
"Burn Fat: Run Your Way to Success," www.mensfitness.com, July 15, 2014.



Happiness is contagious

Last month, it was revealed that Facebook put on a lab coat and performed a social science experiment of its own in 2012.

The social media network rebalanced the news feeds of some 700,000 users to see how it impacted personal emotion. Some news feeds were laden with negative jitter, while others glowed with positive commentary from around the community. The messages were not fabricated, but merely shuffled to show predominantly negative or positive news.

An initial reaction of distrust and perhaps even anger erupted once the word leaked on the unconsented experiment, but researchers have grabbed hold of one important finding: The Facebook users who logged in and read solely happy messages or saw upbeat photos were influenced in a positive way – they were happier.

Each positive post generated an additional 1.75 smile-inducing messages.



The takeaway is that positive imagery, wording and conversation spurs further positivity. (The opposite is true, too, so keep that in mind next time you are on a negative rant in the social sphere!)

"10 Strange Things You Didn't Know Were Contagious," Linda Melone, www.prevention.com, July 15, 2014.

"Detecting Emotional Contagion in Massive Social Networks," Lorenzo Coviello and several authors, www.plosone.org, July 15, 2014.