



Fildes Food Allergy Guide for the Food Service Industry

Food allergies are an increasing fact of life that must be addressed with a professional food safety strategy. The law requires it and the public expects it.

This guide is intended to provide valuable information to the food service industry in relation to adhering to best practice concerning protecting consumers from the allergens which may cause them harm. Once a food service outlet has been advised of a patron's allergens, there is no acceptable excuse if that patron has a reaction to that allergen. The keys to avoiding allergic reactions are comprehensive staff training and clear and concise labelling. This guide focuses on these elements.

Allergy or Intolerance?

Food allergies create adverse immune system responses to specific proteins. The most severe, and perhaps most commonly known, is anaphylaxis which leaves victims gasping for breath and can cause death.

By comparison, a food intolerance does not involve the immune system. Food intolerances occur when the gut is unable to digest certain foods and these can cause discomfort without being life threatening.

Symptoms of Allergic Reactions

The effects of allergic reactions range from mild to extreme. Deaths have occurred. More common reactions include –

- Swelling of the tongue and throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Dizziness leading to collapse
- Persistent cough
- Hoarse voice
- Vomiting
- Wheezing
- Hives
- Facial swelling
- Tingling sensations around the lips and mouth

Quick Facts about Food Allergies



There is no cure for food allergies.



The only way to manage allergies is to avoid the allergen.



Most food allergy fatalities occur because of food eaten outside the home.



Even small traces of allergens can cause severe reactions.

