



Food Allergy Facts and Statistics

- Food allergy is a growing public health concern in the U.S.
- The incidence of food allergy has doubled in the U.S. over the last 10 years. Scientists don't know why.
- More than 12 million Americans have food allergies. That's one in 25, or 4 percent of the population.
- The incidence is even higher in young children – one in 17 among those under age 3.
- About 3.1 million children in the U.S. have food allergies.
- In the U.S., food allergy is the leading cause of anaphylaxis (a severe allergic reaction) outside the hospital setting.
- Food allergy results in more than 30,000 U.S. emergency room visits annually and 150 to 200 deaths, which sometimes occur within minutes.
- Eight foods account for 90 percent of all food-allergic reactions in the U.S.: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (e.g., walnuts, almonds, cashews, pistachios, pecans), wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish.
- There is presently no known cure for food allergy.
- Strict avoidance of the food allergen is the only way to prevent a reaction.
- Even trace amounts of a food allergen can cause a reaction.
- Most people who've had an allergic reaction to something they ate thought that it was safe.
- Food allergies are life-altering for everyone involved and require constant vigilance.
- Early administration of epinephrine (adrenaline) is crucial to successfully treating anaphylactic reactions. Epinephrine is available by prescription in a self-injectable device (EpiPen® or Twinject®).
- A 2007 study has shown that milk allergy may persist longer in life than previously thought. Of 800 children with milk allergy, only 19 percent had outgrown their allergy by age 4, and only 79 percent had outgrown it by age 16.