

What's your policy when it comes to

FOOD ALLERGIES



In addition to the Allergen Awareness Training Certificate,



the employee area poster,



and the Awareness Statement on the menu...



what does your establishment need to know when it comes to allergy awareness and inquiries from your patrons?

- Approximately 1 in 25 persons has a food allergy in the United States
- 83% of persons with food allergies have had allergic reactions in a restaurant
- 66% of allergic individuals do not carry pen medication with them when they go out to eat
- 46% of deaths from allergic reactions have occurred while eating out

Does your establishment have a list of food items and ingredients in each dish? There are some “best practices” that your establishment can benefit from in order to keep the consumer safe from allergic reactions.

Education is the best way to avoid a dangerous situation. Read all ingredient labels and look for “hidden allergies” in each food item. Make sure your staff know what the “Big 8” allergens are. Keep copies of labels on hand to refer to as needed. When a customer inquires about a particular dish or allergy concern, never guess! Always be sure to give the customer the most accurate and honest information.

Allergens can not be “cooked off” and equipment cannot be “sanitized” of allergens. Avoiding cross contamination and thoroughly washing food contact surfaces with soap and water are the only sure ways to be safe. Removing the allergy containing food from a prepared dish is not a solution; this cross contamination could prove to be deadly. The only safe way to prepare an allergy free dish is to start with clean materials.

Take the time to review your establishment policy and educate your staff. Make sure there is someone on staff that can answer customer questions at all times.

Contact the Harwich Health Department if you have any questions or concerns about food allergies.
508-430-7509

reference: Rice, Cindy. Don't Pick Off the Croutons! Braintree:Dining in the Light Publications, 2011.

