

# Food Allergy Awareness for Food Workers What to Know & What to Do



## What to Know

### Food Allergens Can Cause Anaphylaxis & Death Within Minutes

#### SYMPTOMS:

(may range from mild to life threatening)

- ♦ Wheezing or difficulty breathing
- ♦ Hives/itching on face and extremities
- ♦ Swelling of the face and extremities
- ◊ Tightening of the throat/difficulty swallowing
- Sudden vomiting, cramps, or diarrhea
- ♦ Loss of consciousness

#### FACTS:

- Approximately 15 million Americans including 6 million children have food allergies
- $\diamond$  Any food can be an allergen
- Even trace amounts of allergens can trigger an allergic reaction
- The most common food allergens are known as
  "The Big 8" (see list below)

## **Major Food Allergens "The Big 8"**

WilkSoySoyFishWheat

### What to Do

Whenever a guest informs you of a food allergy concern:

### Service Staff: Communicate

- ♦ Take the request seriously
- $\diamond$  Repeat what the guest says to ensure that you understand
- ♦ Tell the Manager, Person-in-Charge, or Chef
- ♦ Inform the guest of your findings

#### **Cooks and Chefs: Control Sources of Cross-Contact**

- Cooking oils, splatter, and steam from allergen containing foods
- $\diamond$   $\;$  Wash your hands and change your gloves
- ◊ Clean and sanitize food prep equipment and utensils
- ♦ Carefully check ingredient labels

# $igtle \Delta$ If a guest has a food allergic reaction, call 911 immediately. $igtree \Delta$

For more info, contact the NJDOH Public Health and Food Protection Program at 609-826-4935 or visit www.nj.gov/health/ceohs/food-drug-safety. The New Jersey Restaurant & Hospitality Association website is www.njrha.org. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration website is www.fda.gov.