

Food allergens



In a nutshell: Food allergy is an unusual, potentially life-threatening, immune system response that happens quickly after consuming particular foods. Food premises should inform consumers of any food allergen information.

Food allergy refers to the unusual reaction of the human immune system to certain substances or ingredients in food. The food trade should prevent any unintended cross-contamination of food allergens to food products or cutlery. In Hong Kong, common food ingredients that can cause food allergy are as follows:



Allergens	Some typical examples of food item in which allergens may be found
Cereals that contain gluten (e.g. wheat, rye, barley and oats)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In foods containing flour, such as bread, pasta, cakes, pastry, meat products, sauces, soups, batter, stock cubes, breadcrumbs, foods dusted with flour, vegetarian products (e.g. plant-based milk)
Crustaceans (e.g. prawns, crabs and lobsters)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In shrimp paste
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In cakes, mousses, sauces, pasta, quiche, some meat products, mayonnaise, foods brushed with egg
Fish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In some salad dressings, pizzas, relishes, fish sauce, other sauces (e.g. soy and Worcestershire sauces)
Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In yoghurt, cream, cheese, butter, milk powders, foods glazed with milk
Molluscs (e.g. mussels and oysters)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In oyster sauce
Tree nuts (e.g. almonds, cashews, hazelnuts, pecans and walnuts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In sauces, desserts, crackers, bread, ice cream, marzipan, ground almonds, nut oils, vegetarian products (e.g. plant-based milk)
Peanuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In sauces and spread (e.g. peanut butter), cakes, desserts, groundnut oil, peanut flour
Soybeans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In beancurd (tofu), green soybeans (edamame), fermented beans (douchi), tempeh, soya flour, textured soya protein, certain ice-cream, soy sauces, desserts, meat products, vegetarian products (e.g. plant-based milk and meat)
Sulphur dioxide and sulphites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In meat products, fruit juice drinks, dried fruit and vegetables, wine, beer

When taking orders, waiting staff can ask customers if they have any food allergies, and confirm with the cooks whether the dishes contain the concerned allergens.

Your customer may be suffering a severe food allergic reaction when he/she develops the symptoms of a swollen tongue, breathing difficulties, tight chest, trouble swallowing or speaking, dizziness and collapse. Please call 999 for help at once.