



Food Service: Food Allergy Information

Austintown Schools Food Service Department
AFFoodServices@austintownschools.org | (330) 797-3900 ext. 1315

Promptly complete the Emergency Medical Form & Emergency Allergy Plan (if applicable). The clinic updates Food Services annually with student allergen information. Food Services updates food allergies each year.

We take life-threatening food allergies seriously and want to do our best to protect our students. The following outlines how Food Services observes food allergies, intolerances, and preferences:

Life-Threatening Food Allergies

We observe life-threatening food allergies as ones in which a student has prescription medication on file with the school clinic. These students could have trouble breathing, break out in hives, or go into anaphylactic shock from eating a food item they are allergic to. This is considered life-threatening. Based on the Emergency Medical Form, Food Services sets an alert on your student's meal account notifying our staff of the life-threatening allergy and prohibiting your child from purchasing such items. We offer few menu items that contain life-threatening allergens like peanuts or tree nuts, but it does not eliminate the possibility of exposure to allergens. **It is possible that cross-contact may occur.** Cross-contact is when a food item with an allergen (such as peanut butter), touches another food item that does not normally have exposure to allergens (such as carrots).

As stated above, we take allergies seriously, so please be clear about your student's dietary needs.

Dairy Allergy vs. Dairy- or Lactose-Intolerance

- 1) **Dairy Allergy** – A dairy allergy means your child is allergic to the protein in cow's milk and ingesting it means it could threaten their life. If you inform us that your student has a dairy allergy, we will refuse to serve them anything with dairy or milk protein in it such as chocolate milk, pizza, cheese sticks, yogurt, toasted cheese, macaroni and cheese, etc.
- 2) **Dairy- or Lactose-Intolerance** – Lactose-intolerance means your child is intolerant of the sugar called lactose in regular cow's milk and they could have an upset stomach or discomfort if ingested. If your student is intolerant of regular milk, they may choose to take lactose-free milk. Juice is not an allowable substitute per the USDA. If they are intolerant of regular milk but may have cheese or other milk products, then the parent must contact the Food Services Office directly to clarify this meal account restriction.

Food Intolerances

If your student is intolerant of a food item, we will do our best to ensure they do not receive that food item. The biggest occurrence of intolerance is lactose (or sugar) in milk – see above. To ensure a specific restriction is on your student's meal account, contact the Food Services Office directly.

Food Preferences

Because life-threatening food allergies are of utmost importance to the safety of our students, we cannot observe food preferences. Every cafeteria offers several different choices of each food component each day. For example, if pineapple is offered and your student does not like pineapple, they may choose another fruit offering. Religious and ethnic dietary needs are observed if we are notified.

Notifying Food Services

Please help us teach your children with allergies the food items they must avoid. Ultimately, it is the parents' responsibility to ensure Food Services has the most updated allergy information for our students. We do our best to include the allergy information of our menu items on our website, AFFoodServices.com (hover over each menu item to see allergy information). If you would like to have a specific conversation with Food Services about your student's needs, please call our office at (330) 797-3900 ext. 1315.