

Food Allergy and UCASD Food Service

We need your help! When it comes to your child's food allergy, you can support the success of the school nutrition staff at your child's school and create peace of mind for yourself with early and frequent communication.

At UCASD we read and re-read literally hundreds of food labels. We practice and implement cross-contact prevention strategies as we prepare nearly one thousand meals every day. We wash hands and change gloves between every new task. We check and recheck lists of students with food allergy. We work each day to protect the children we serve. We know you are depending on us.

Here are some tips to help ensure the school nutrition staff becomes your strongest allies in keeping your child with food allergy safe at school:

- **Inform the school Food Service department of your child's food allergy before your child starts school.**

- **Obtain the documentation required for meal accommodations for a food allergy and have your physician sign necessary forms.**

Must include the following information: (1) Identification of the medical condition (i.e. food allergy to peanuts); (2) why or how this restricts the child's diet, including all major life activities affected by the student's condition (i.e. breathing, swallowing, etc.); (3) which foods must be omitted from the diet; and, (4) which substitutions are allowed.

- **Provide written permission to the physician's office for the school Food Service department to discuss your child's food allergy**

Various health privacy rules, like HIPAA, prevent the release of medical information to any unauthorized person. If we need additional information from your doctor, he/she can't talk to us unless you give permission. Provide written authorization at the same time you request forms to be signed by your doctor.

•Tell the school Food Service Director what food allergy safe foods your child likes and doesn't like to eat.

We know that a hungry child cannot learn. If available to us, we will make every attempt to provide foods your child likes and can safely eat while dining with us at school.

•Obtain documentation for any changes in meal accommodations for food allergy and provide a copy to the school Food Service department as soon as possible.

Keep us updated! Until we receive written confirmation that your child has outgrown a food allergy, we will not let him or her have that food previously reported as an allergen. Likewise, we must have new documentation on file if your child is now allergic to additional foods.

•Supply the school with current phone numbers to contact you with questions or in case of an emergency.

As obvious as this may sound, you'd be surprised how many parents get new cell phones, change work numbers and so forth, in the middle of the school year and forget to update contact information with the school and specifically with the Food Service department. Please make sure we know how best to contact you with questions or concerns regarding your child's food allergy.

UCASD Food Service staff members share the same goal you have- to keep your child safe while eating at school. Please help us accomplish this extremely important task by communicating directly with Krista Byler, UCASD Food Service Director at 438-7673x5466 or kbyler@ucasd.org. Early and frequent communication strengthens our resolve to protect the students we serve in school nutrition. Arm us with knowledge and details...and we'll take care of your child as if he/she were our own.