



PEANUT ALLERGY

Peanut (legume) Allergy can be a life-long allergy affecting approximately 2% of the population. Peanut allergy is the most common cause of death due to foods. Three things characterize peanut hypersensitivity:

- Reactions can be extremely violent and life threatening with just a little exposure to the allergen.
- This allergy likely to persist throughout life.
- It is often associated with other non-legume allergies (tree nuts, or certain seeds for example) and seed allergy. Peanut and tree nut allergic reactions coexist in one third of peanut allergic patients.

The most commonly reported symptoms seen with this kind of allergy include: [atopic dermatitis \(eczema\)](#), [urticaria \(hives\)](#), [asthma](#), [anaphylactic shock](#), digestive symptoms.

Common places you will find peanuts, peanut oils or trace amounts of peanut include:

- Peanut, groundnut, arachis
- Peanut butter
- Baked goods - pastry, biscuits, cookies, crackers, health bread
- Asian foods - Thai, Chinese & Indonesian dishes
- Vegetarian foods
- Cold pressed (crude) peanut oil
- Muesli and other cereals
- Ice creams
- Mixed Nuts, marzipan
- Soups
- Natural flavoring
- Egg rolls
- Health foods – nutrition and energy bars and other sweets
- Sauces



As with most allergies, avoidance is key. Make sure to read all labels for foods, medicines, cosmetics, creams and ointments that may contain any type or amount of peanut. A history of allergic reactions shortly after exposure to peanuts might suggest an allergy. However, this should be confirmed with a skin prick test or RAST. Talk to your doctor about a complete diagnosis.

SOURCE: This information should not substitute for seeking responsible, professional medical care. First created 1995; fully updated 1998; most recently updated 2005.

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