



Peanut and Tree Nut Aware Lunches and Snacks



Why was I asked to pack peanut/tree nut-safe lunches and snacks?

- Most schools have a nut aware policy which means foods containing **peanuts** and/or **tree nuts** are not to be taken to school as there are children who have a life-threatening peanut and/or tree-nut allergy.
- Allergic reactions to peanuts and tree nuts can be fatal. Even very small amounts of peanut and/or tree nuts or residue can cause a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).
- **Tree nuts** include almonds, Brazil Nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts (pignolias), pistachio nuts, and walnuts. Other names for tree nuts are listed below.
- **Peanuts** are part of the legume family and are not considered a tree nut. Other names for peanuts are listed on the next page

How can I tell if a food has peanuts or tree nuts in it?

- Read food labels carefully. Read the entire ingredient list every time you shop. Even if a product looks the same it is possible the ingredients or labelling have changed.
- In Canada, food products that contain peanuts or tree nuts must list these items in the ingredient list and/or in a 'contains' statement. For example, a product that has peanuts in it would include the word "peanut" in the ingredient list, or in a statement like "Contains peanuts", or both.

Ingredients: Whole grain oats, sugar, whole wheat flour, canola oil, peanuts, salt, natural flavour
Contains: peanuts

Ingredients: Whole grain oats, sugar, whole wheat flour, canola oil, almonds, salt, natural flavour
Contains: Almonds

- Precautionary statements like "free from" or "may contain" claims are examples of voluntary label statements. These statements do not replace the need to read the ingredients list.
- Imported products may have different labeling requirements than Canada. Always read the label and ingredient list carefully if choosing these products.
- If a product does not contain an ingredients list, contact the manufacturer for details or consider not sending the product to school.

Other names for *tree nuts*
(Note: This is not a complete list)

- Anacardium nuts
- Queensland nuts
- Pignons Filberts
- Nut meats

Other names for *peanuts* (Note: This is not a complete list)

- Arachis
- Beer nuts
- Goober nuts
- Ground nuts
- Kernels
- Mandelonas, Nu-Nuts™
- Nut meats
- Valencias

Examples of foods that contain or may contain *peanuts* and/or *tree nuts* (Note: this is not a complete list).

- Canned fish, in oil
- Gravies
- Cookies, muffins, granola bars, etc.,
- Hydrolyzed plant protein
- Cereals
- Icing, glazes
- Chili con carne
- Ice cream/ frozen desserts
- Chinese food, curries, pad Thai, satays
- Marzipan (almond paste)
- Chocolate bars
- Nougat
- Crackers
- Pesto
- Dehydrated soup mixes
- Potato chips, popcorn, trail mix
- Dried fruit
- Salad dressing
- Fried foods
- Tree nut oils
- Granola, cereal, breakfast bars
- Vegetarian meat substitutes

**Food allergens may be present in products you don't expect.
Always read the ingredients list carefully.**

How to prepare peanut/tree nut-safe lunches and snacks

- Know your school board's/ school's food allergy policy. In some school boards peanut butter substitutes are also not permitted.
- Avoid cross-contamination. Cross-contamination happens when small amounts of a food allergen (e.g.: peanut protein) gets into another food accidentally, or when it is present in saliva, on a surface or on an object. For example, if a knife used to spread peanut butter is then used in a jar of jam, the jam now contains traces of peanut protein. This may be enough to cause an allergic reaction for a child with a severe food allergy.
- Wash hands with soap and water prior to preparing food.
- Ensure cutting boards, utensils, counter tops and containers are cleaned and sanitized before preparing lunches/snacks.
- Use Canada's food guide (www.canada.ca/cfg) to plan lunches and snacks. See our "Packing School Lunches" factsheet for more ideas.

Speak with your child about the school's rules around food allergies and keep them in mind when packing lunches/snacks.

For more information visit:

Food Allergy Canada www.foodallergycanada.ca

Allergy Aware - free online course to help keep people safe. www.allergyaware.ca

Prefer to speak to a Registered Dietitian? Call Telehealth Ontario toll free at 1-866-797-0000.

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