



## 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](http://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](http://www.foodallergycanada.ca)

**Allergy Aware** - free online course to help keep people safe. [www.allergyaware.ca](http://www.allergyaware.ca)

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

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