

## Seven Hills Nut Safe Allergy FAQs

Peanut allergy is an enormous clinical problem. It is the third most common food allergy in young children and the most common food allergy in older children, adolescents, and adults. In addition to its substantial prevalence, it is the food allergen most capable of causing severe, life-threatening, and even fatal allergic reactions. The diagnosis of peanut allergy therefore carries tremendous medical and emotional significance.

Because avoidance is the only available treatment for food allergy at this time, patients with peanut allergy must take extraordinary care to eliminate all peanut-containing foods from the diet. This is far more difficult than it sounds, especially because of the cross-contamination of foods that may occur in the manufacturing process. In addition to the obvious goal of avoiding peanuts in the diet, another key issue facing patients with peanut allergy and their families involves other potential sources of accidental exposure. Inadvertent exposure has been reported to occur in environmental settings such as restaurants, schools, and other public places—for instance, sporting events and commercial airline flights. Although these reactions are presumed to occur by exposure through skin contact or inhalation of airborne allergen, in most of these reports, accidental ingestion of peanut could not be entirely ruled out. A recent study reported that casual contact or inhalation of peanut butter does not pose a significant risk for severe reactions, suggesting that many of the reports of casual contact or inhalation reactions may in fact be caused by inadvertent ingestion. ([Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology](#))

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**Which nuts cannot be brought to school?**

Peanuts and tree nuts should not be brought to school. The following nuts are tree nuts and should not be brought to school: walnuts, almonds, pecans, hazelnuts, cashews, pistachios, Brazil nuts, pine nuts, macadamia nuts.

**Are seeds OK?**

Yes. All seeds such as sunflower seeds, sesame seeds or pepitos can be brought to school. The only items that cannot be brought to school are peanuts and tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans, hazelnuts, cashews, pistachios, Brazil nuts, pine nuts, and macadamia nuts).

**Can items with coconut be brought to school?**

Yes. Coconut is actually the seed of a drupaceous fruit and does not trigger a reaction in a person with a tree-nut allergy. Patients diagnosed with tree-nut allergy are not advised to avoid coconut.

**My child usually eats a peanut butter sandwich for lunch. I'm looking for a good peanut butter substitute to use instead. Which ones can I bring to school and which should stay at home?**

Peanut butter substitutes not made of nuts including Wow butter, Biscoff spread (made of biscoff cookies), I.M. Healthy SoyNut Butter (made of soybeans), and Sunbutter (made of sunflower seeds) can safely be brought to school. When combined with jelly, most kids can't tell it's not peanut butter. All tree-nut-butter spreads are made of nuts and should stay at home. These include cashew butter, almond butter and Nutella.

**When a label says, "manufactured in a facility" with nuts or "processed on shared equipment" with nuts can I bring that to school?**

We ask that families build awareness around this and if at all possible to send a snack that does not have these disclaimers on them. We also know that may not be possible for all families. So if a child brings a snack that does contain nuts in the ingredients, including nut flours and oils, that snack will be replaced with an alternative snack from our alternative exchange snack box. However, if a snack is 'processed in a facility/on equipment that shares nuts' then we will not confiscate exchange it.

Only items that actually contain nuts or have the label "may contain" or "may contain trace" nuts should be left at home.

**IMPORTANT:** allergic children cannot actually eat items with the "manufactured in a facility" with nuts or "processed on shared equipment" with nuts labels, but these foods can safely be consumed by other children nearby.

**I usually send a cake or cupcakes to school for a school function. Can I continue to do so?**

Yes, unless your child's teacher has told you otherwise. (If in doubt, contact your child's teacher.) Some of the baked goods at these bakeries have labels that say, "processed in a facility" with nuts or "processed on shared equipment" with nuts. Items with these labels still comply with the nut-sensitive policy and are safe to bring to school. See this link for a list of nut-free bakeries check [foodallergy.network.com](http://foodallergy.network.com) for listings such as:

Let Them Eat Cake <http://www.allergyfriendlypastries.com/>

Miglets <http://www.migletsgf.com/>

James and the Giant Cupcake <http://jamesandthegiantcupcake.com/>

Please note that items from these bakeries may not be safe for a peanut or tree nut allergic child to actually eat. Please check.

Additionally, you are welcome to bring in a home-baked cake, either from scratch or from a mix with canned frosting. Cake mixes, canned frosting, and sprinkles are all safe to bring to school. Again, check with your child's teacher before bringing in one of these items if you know there is a peanut or tree-nut allergic child in your classroom.

**Can I bake a cake or cupcakes for a school function?**

Yes. Please label the item as "Nut Free", "Baked with Love and no Nuts".

**I will try my best to comply with the nut-sensitive policy, but I'm worried I might accidentally send something containing nuts. What are some food items that might contain hidden nuts?**

Snack and lunch foods that typically contain peanuts or tree nuts are protein or energy bars, granola bars, chocolate candy, some cookies, a few breads (like Orowheat Health Nut Bread), and, of course, nut-butter sandwiches (like peanut butter sandwiches). See the Safe Snack Guide at <http://snacksafely.com/>

**My child usually brings a protein or granola bar to school for a snack. Are there nut-free protein and granola bars that are safe to send instead?**

Yes. Most granola and protein bars do contain or "may contain" nuts and those should be left at home. See the Safe Snack Guide at <http://snacksafely.com/>

**What are some snack foods that don't contain peanuts and tree nuts?**

Many snack foods do not contain peanuts or tree nuts. Some examples are pretzels, Nutri-Grain cereal bars, yogurt, graham crackers, fruit, cheese, carrot or celery sticks and ranch dressing, Goldfish, Teddy Grahams, Pirates Booty, Popcorn, bagels, Nilla Wafers, animal crackers, tortilla chips, potato chips, Fritos, Sun Chips, Cheetos, plain Ritz crackers, Cheese Its, hummus, Carr's Water Crackers, Wheat Thins, Triscuits, Oreo cookies, and Chips Ahoy. See the Safe Snack Guide at <http://snacksafely.com/>

**What are some kid lunch foods that don't contain peanuts or tree nuts?**

Cold cuts, tuna, hot dog, hamburger, chicken nuggets, quesadilla, soup, pizza, hummus, pimento cheese, yogurt, cheese, fruit, pasta, tortilla wraps are all examples of kid lunch foods that don't contain peanuts or tree nuts. In addition, sunflower seed butter, Soy Nut butter and most Lunchables also provide easy lunch options. See the Safe Snack Guide at <http://snacksafely.com/>

**One reason I like to send peanut butter to school is that it contains protein. I'm concerned that without the peanut butter my child won't get enough protein. What are some alternative protein sources I can send instead?**

It's quite easy for children to get protein daily, especially if they eat animal foods. Meat and meat-products have all nine essential amino acids, which makes them complete proteins. Fish, lean meat, skinless poultry and low-fat dairy are excellent sources for your child. Plant-based foods such as whole grains and vegetables also contain protein, but the only complete plant protein is soy.

According to the CDC, children ages 4-8 need only 19 grams of protein daily, while children ages 9-13 need 34 grams of protein daily. These requirements can easily be met. For

example, one oz. piece of meat (about half a serving) contains 21 grams of protein. One cup of milk has 8 grams of protein, one cup of dried beans has about 16 grams of protein, and an oz. container of yogurt contains about 11 grams of protein.

If you are concerned that your child is not eating enough protein, nut-free peanut butter substitutes such as Wowbutter, I.M. Healthy SoyNut Butter and Sunbutter provide protein. Additional protein sources are milk, cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese, hard-boiled eggs, chicken, turkey, ham, hot dogs, turkey or chicken hot dogs, hummus, pork, chicken nuggets, chickpeas, beans, peas, chicken salad, fish sticks, hamburgers, tofu, soy milk, hemp milk, and protein powder made of milk. If you are a vegan, some protein alternatives are hemp protein, chia seeds, peas, edamame, rice protein, spirulina, kidney beans, and all varieties of beans.

**Are doughnuts safe to bring to school?**

It depends on what they're cooked in. Some doughnuts are cooked in peanut oil. Those doughnuts are not safe to bring to school. Additionally, some doughnuts have nuts sprinkled on top. These doughnuts are also not safe to bring to school. Krispy Kreme glazed doughnuts are not cooked in peanut oil and are safe to bring to school.

**Is pizza safe to bring to school?**

Yes. Pizza from anywhere is safe as long as it doesn't have pesto on it.

**Peanut oil is on the list of items not to bring to school. What is it used for and how can I avoid accidentally sending it to school?**

Peanut oil is used in sit-down restaurants to fry food and season griddles. Even then, it is seldom used. It is also sometimes used to fry doughnuts (but not at Krispy Kreme). Peanut oil is not used in baked goods or in packaged snack foods. It is also not used at fast food restaurants other than the hypo-allergenic peanut oil used at Chick-fil-A.

**Peanut and tree-nut flour are on the list of items not to bring to school. What are they used for and how can I avoid accidentally sending them to school?**

Peanut and tree-nut flours are used in protein bars and protein powders. They are also in some Kashi cookies. They are not in regular baked goods or breads and are not substituted for regular flour.