

Food allergy aware checklist

Here's a handy checklist you can place on your workplace notice board or laminate for your kitchen.

KNOW what is in your food

- Only accept correctly labelled foods.
- Check all ingredients even in sauces, spices, garnishes, oils, dressings etc for allergens.
- Avoid ingredient substitution.
- Be familiar with all ingredients as some may be derived from one or more food allergens which may not be obvious from their name.

LISTEN to your customers and be 100% truthful

- Take customer requests about allergens seriously. Listen carefully.
- Give customers accurate information about the content of meals when they ask.
- Have a specific protocol to follow if a customer says they have a food allergy.
- Place the name of known allergens next to menu items, if possible.
- Include a note on all menus asking customers to ALWAYS disclose their food allergy when ordering.

PREPARE food safely

- Always double check the ingredients with the chef.
- Handle food safely. Start fresh for meals that must be free of an allergen.
- Clean and sanitise work surfaces, utensils and other food-contact items between foods. Even very small amounts can be harmful (e.g. 1000th of a peanut).
- Have a dedicated area for preparing allergen free meals (be aware that food that is safe for one customer with a food allergy may be unsafe for another customer with a different food allergy).
- Whenever possible, prepare foods for people with food allergy first.
- Have some way of identifying the meal for the customer with food allergy.
- Always take the meal to the customer with a food allergy separately, not whilst carrying other meals.
- Check the correct allergen free meal is given to the customer with the food allergy.

EDUCATE your staff

- If you are required to have a Food Safety Supervisor, ensure their food allergen management training is up to date.
- Train and test all staff regularly in food safety, hygiene and allergen awareness. The National Allergy Strategy offers free 'All about Allergens' food allergy training available from www.foodallergytraining.org.au
- Teach staff of their obligation to declare certain allergens.
- Ensure your staff are updated on new laws and legislation relating to allergen management.
- Display 'The Usual Suspects' poster in your kitchen - available from: www.allergyfacts.org.au/shop