

# Allergy Guide

Student Guide to Managing  
Food Allergies in the  
Residential Dining Commons



UCHICAGO  
DINING

*Food. Life. Balance.*

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## OUR PHILOSOPHY

UChicago Dining hosts students and resident staff in a community-based residential dining program. Dining together is a cornerstone of how community is created in the College Houses. UChicago Dining supports students who have food allergies by providing information to help them make informed food choices in the three residential dining commons: Baker, Bartlett, and Cathey.

We work with students to provide reasonable arrangements so that they may participate in the residential dining experience as much as possible. We take into account each student's particular dietary needs and provide students who have food allergies with the tools that they need to actively manage their allergy or food-related medical condition within the residential dining program.



## YOUR MANAGEMENT

Student responsibilities when managing a food allergy in the residential dining commons

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### **Notify UChicago Dining of your allergy(ies).**

- Provide medical documentation, if requested, to Student Disability Services.
- Attend informational meetings and develop a plan so that you can navigate the dining commons.

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### **Be proficient in the self-management of your food allergy(ies).**

- Recognize common sources of, and avoid, foods to which you are allergic.
- Recognize symptoms of allergic reactions.
- Know how and when to tell someone you might be having an allergy-related problem.
- Properly use medications.
- Carry emergency contact information with you.
- Review policies and procedures with UChicago Dining and your physician.

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### **When in doubt about ingredients in a particular food, direct your questions to a manager or one of our chefs.**

If you do not know who these individuals are, please ask a cashier to assist you.

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### **Read menus and ingredient information available at dining stations and [dining.uchicago.edu](http://dining.uchicago.edu).**

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### **Ask employees to change their gloves, use a fresh knife or pan, etc., as needed to reduce cross-contact concerns.**

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**Consider making more selections from served stations,** and talk with a chef or manager for best options from the self-serve areas to reduce cross-contact concerns.

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**If you have a question at any point, please ask.** If we do not hear from you, we believe that you are successfully navigating the dining commons.

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**In case of exposure, carry any medication (e.g., EpiPen, Benadryl, etc.) with you at all times.** Consider informing those you commonly dine with about your medical needs in case of emergency.

## AVOIDING CROSS-CONTACT

Cross-contact occurs when a food comes into contact with another food and their proteins mix, creating the potential for an allergic reaction. Since about half of the food in the dining commons is self-serve, cross-contact is possible. UChicago Dining works to educate other diners to use designated utensils in the self-serve areas in order to reduce cross-contact concerns.

### To avoid cross-contact:

- Ask dining employees to change their gloves.
- Ask dining employees to use new utensils, or a fresh pan, at made-to-order stations.
- Avoid eating deep-fried foods. Frying oil is reused before being changed; this can lead to cross-contact because food fried in oil releases some of its protein, which is then absorbed by other foods fried in the same oil. Foods that are deep-fried include: egg rolls, fried fish, mozzarella sticks, nuggets, chicken fingers, onion rings, homemade potato chips, and french fries.
- At the salad bar and deli station, request produce or meat that is stored behind the counter.



## In Case of a Reaction

**If you are exhibiting symptoms of anaphylaxis, please take the following steps:**

- 1** Get help immediately—call 911 or indicate to someone around you to call 911.
- 2** Administer your auto injector.
- 3** Never go back to your room alone.
- 4** Notify your Resident Head as soon as possible about your experience.

We make every effort to provide you with the information you need to make decisions about which foods to eat in the residential dining commons. However, the possibility for a reaction exists in community dining. If you have been prescribed an auto injector, you should carry it at all times.

## YOUR RESOURCES

UChicago Dining services available to help manage food allergy(ies)

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**An individual informational meeting** with UChicago Dining staff, including our house dietitian, to help you to develop an individual plan to navigate the residential dining commons

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**Dietitians, chefs, and staff** help address ongoing questions and concerns. They can be reached at [dining-dietitian@uchicago.edu](mailto:dining-dietitian@uchicago.edu) and [dining@uchicago.edu](mailto:dining@uchicago.edu).

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**Access to the dry and cold food storage** to review ingredients personally (with advance notice)

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**Online menus** for each residential dining location at [dining.uchicago.edu](http://dining.uchicago.edu) providing full nutrition information

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**Major ingredient information** for most items on station signage

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**Access to individually packaged foods** to replace bulk items that have a high likelihood of cross-contact (e.g., packets of cream cheese, butter, jelly, and peanut butter)

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**Fresh gloves, utensils, or pans** at made-to-order stations, used upon request, to reduce cross-contact concerns

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**Introduction to the dining management team**, giving you direct access to individuals responsible for food preparation

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**Encourage diner awareness** to educate all diners about cross-contact concerns



## OUR COMMITMENT: HOW WE HELP YOU

Planning for students with special dietary needs

1

An initial meeting with UChicago Dining and our dietitian will help us to gather information about your allergy(ies) and how you have managed the allergy(ies) in the past. At this point, you may need to provide medical documentation to Student Disability Services, who may also consult on a plan for managing your allergy(ies).

2

After the initial meeting, we will communicate with the residential dining commons manager about your specific dietary needs.

3

The UChicago Dining team, including the executive chef and your dining commons manager as well as our dietitian, will meet with you for a second time to develop your individual plan for navigating your residential dining commons. These individuals can serve as resources throughout the year to help you find food safe for you to eat.



## SPECIFIC ALLERGY INFORMATION

UChicago Dining safely serves many students with food allergies every day. We have clear and concise protocols that take into account our from-scratch cooking methods and ensure students are safely fed. We also seek ongoing guidance from expert professional organizations, such as Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE), to guarantee our approach remains current and reflects best practice guidelines.

### **Per our food allergy policy, we work to ensure that:**

- Managers and hourly associates participate in Food Allergen Awareness Training.
- Descriptive, responsible menu nomenclature identifies the eight major food allergens in naming and descriptions.
- Ingredient questions are directed to managers.
- Relationships are developed to foster direct communication in line with best practices outlined in the FARE restaurant guidelines ([foodallergy.org](http://foodallergy.org)).

We use manufacturer-provided information regarding the presence of allergens; we do not confirm the lack of an allergen. As a result, we may not be aware of ingredients that are in the food but not listed on the container or packaging. UChicago Dining periodically reviews ingredients to verify ingredient labeling is consistent with what is provided by the manufacturer. Ingredients listed may be subject to change without notification.

Students with food allergies have the right to request and view the ingredient labels for food products being offered. In fact, students are encouraged to speak with a manager for individualized assistance.

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### **PEANUT ALLERGIES**

In an effort to decrease cross-contact, individual peanut butter packets are available in the residence halls. Peanuts may also be present in select desserts, including ice cream. Students with a peanut allergy are asked to refrain from eating desserts and are encouraged to request to view and check the ice cream ingredient labels.

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### **TREE NUT ALLERGIES**

The pesto sauce that UChicago Dining serves is made in-house and is pine nut free. Tree nuts may be present in select desserts, including ice cream. Students with a tree nut allergy are asked to refrain from eating desserts and are encouraged to request to view and check the ingredient labels.

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### **MILK ALLERGIES**

Soy milk and rice milk are available in each dining commons in coolers. Please ask any dining manager for information on their location. UChicago Dining uses butter or margarine in its recipes; please check station signage. Items that are prepared off-site may also contain butter; students are asked to check the ingredients of items they wish to eat. The Kosher stations in Baker, Bartlett, and Cathey Dining Commons are certified to be free of milk by the Chicago Rabbinical Council.

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### **EGG ALLERGIES**

Eggs are present in many items throughout the dining commons. Students with an egg allergy are asked to refrain from eating baked goods and are encouraged to request to view and check menus and signage.

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### **FISH ALLERGIES**

Some items have fish as an ingredient. Students with fish allergies are asked to check menus and signage.

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### **WHEAT ALLERGIES**

Individually packaged foods, such as packets of jelly, butter, peanut butter, and cream cheese, are available to replace bulk items that have a high likelihood of cross-contact. Please ask your dining manager for information on the location of these items in your dining commons. At each dining commons location, we have a station that features made without gluten items. This station is certified by the Gluten Intolerance Group (GIG).

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### **SOY ALLERGIES**

Students with soy allergies are asked to check menus and signage.

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### **SHELLFISH ALLERGIES**

Shellfish are sometimes on the menu. Students with shellfish allergies are asked to check the menus and signage.

## **OUR WORK TOGETHER**

We are committed to helping you to reasonably participate in the residential dining experience.

You are encouraged to contact UChicago Dining if you believe that you cannot manage your allergy(ies) effectively in the residential dining commons. If you still believe that participating in UChicago Dining's program is not right for you, you may petition UChicago Dining to be released from the meal plan requirement. You will be required to submit a petition that documents your rationale for this request. Documentation from your treating physician is required to help Student Disability Services determine if you can be served by the dining program. UChicago Dining will then evaluate if it is feasible to meet your expressed, documented needs.

If you are released from the meal plan, having access to appropriate kitchen and food storage facilities is necessary. A room change may be required to facilitate the canceling of the meal plan.



## YOUR HOUSING

How your allergy(ies) relate to roommates and House activities

Living in communal housing that is not comprised of family is an important part of the College experience. For most students, this is the first time they have navigated the complexities associated with roommates, shared bathrooms, community kitchens, or co-ed neighbors.

Learning how to successfully live in this environment and effectively communicate with roommates, Housemates, or hallmates is an important life skill, especially when it comes to managing your food allergy(ies).

Regardless of whether or not you have a roommate, it will be important for you to consider communicating any food allergy(ies) with the residential staff—your Resident Head(s), Resident

Assistant(s), and your Resident Dean(s). They can be supportive around providing alternative food options (when possible) at various House and Hall events.

If you do have a roommate or suitemates, it is always a good option to include them in your preventative food allergy plan. Most roommates want to be helpful and contribute to a safe and harmonious living situation.

Should your allergy(ies) rise to the level of a disability and you need consideration regarding your housing assignment, you are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services for information about the housing accommodations process.



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**DINING**

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For more information about our process for managing allergies, including menus and available alternatives, visit [dining.uchicago.edu](http://dining.uchicago.edu).