



# Travel Information

## Travelling with food allergies is challenging but with careful planning it is possible.

This information is intended as a guide for travel when you are at risk of anaphylaxis. Specific information on travel and your health needs should always be obtained from your doctor. Your doctor may advise on a management plan in case you do have an anaphylaxis whilst away from the safety of your home town and/or not close to medical help. Doctors encourage people at risk of anaphylaxis to take several medications along with them including antihistamines, asthma medication (if they have asthma), their adrenaline auto injector and their Anaphylaxis Action Plan.

### BEFORE YOU TRAVEL:

- Whether travelling by air within Australia or overseas you will need to contact the airlines to receive their up to date policy regarding their rules for carrying medication. Do your research directly with the airlines and not through a travel agent.
- Do not expect peanut free, egg free, milk free or allergen free flights. The reality is that some food allergens can be reduced but a guarantee that any given space is free of an allergen is not possible. Remember, passengers bring their own foods on the flight too. It is important to work on strategies to reduce the risk of a food allergic reaction well before the flight date. You can:

*-alert them to the fact you have a food allergy*

*-enquire about foods/snacks served*

*-ask that no nut snacks are served as a small number of people eating a nut product they have brought on the flight is very different to a whole plane full of passengers eating a pack of nuts all at the one time.*

*-take your own food. Ask about re heating or storage of your safe foods. Have a doctor's letter stating you have food allergy and may need to take your own foods.*

*-think about the time of day you are travelling. If egg and milk allergic, travel after breakfast may be a little safer.*

- Some travel insurance policies do not automatically include those at risk of anaphylaxis. Make sure you investigate this and take out a policy that protects you in case of an anaphylaxis. There is sometimes an added cost if you have specific health conditions.



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- Most airlines recommend you carry some form of documentation or identification to support the need for your medication and/or food. A letter from your doctor/allergist and pharmacy labelled medication is essential. Pack sufficient medication and keep the medication and your Anaphylaxis Action Plan with you at all times for easy access. Keep medications in their labelled package
- Most airlines do not have food restriction policies. When making your enquiries ensure you get the name of the person who assists you and if possible ask for confirmation of your requests in writing. Keep this with you at all times
- We strongly recommend food allergic passengers take their own food from home, keeping in mind there may be delays. This will minimise the risk of an allergic reaction. If you have a stop over, you will need to check on quarantine laws before your departure as you may need to throw out some foods (i.e. fruit, vegetables, meat. Some countries have specific requirements) and this may leave you short of safe foods for the next part of the journey. Safe to eat, non perishable foods are easiest to manage on flights.
- Think about the times you are flying. Will there be a full meal served?
- Arrive early and allow yourself plenty of time to re-confirm your requests.

### ON THE DAY:

- Ask to board the plane a little earlier than everyone else so you can wipe down the tray table and pick up any unwanted food particles left behind if you have a child that has a food allergy. Whilst casual contact with food crumbs and smears is highly unlikely to cause severe allergic reaction, contamination of your safe food may be a problem.
- Remember to ask for assistance from your fellow passengers. Let those around you know that your child has a peanut or egg allergy for example and not to offer them food. Try to position the child away from other passengers or areas where food and drink will be passed over them i.e. in a window seat or between you and the non-allergic sibling/partner. This may not always be possible but if it is and you have a busy toddler/preschooler, it may be helpful.
- On boarding, speak to the senior cabin crew member to alert them to the food allergic passenger.
- Make sure your emergency medication and Anaphylaxis Action Plan is easily accessible when you are seated with your seatbelt on. Adrenaline auto injectors must not travel in the cargo under-carriage for several reasons including temperature control, risk of damage and need to have the medication close by and easily accessible in case of that unplanned emergency.



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- Take a minimum of two adrenaline auto injectors (EpiPen®) with you when travelling interstate, overseas or even remote areas within your own state.
- Allergic reactions to food during travel have been documented. The most serious reactions are those where the allergen is eaten. The risk of serious allergic reactions from inhalation or touching of an allergen is considered to be extremely low. It is important to note that airborne particles can cause respiratory symptoms i.e. asthma, allergic rhinitis but several allergists and immunologists have stated that reactions to inhaled or touched allergens may cause localised symptoms and usually not general systemic, anaphylactic reactions. All individuals are advised to minimise the risk of any reaction.