

## Know what to avoid:

- There are many different names for food allergens. You need to know all of the names so there is no question if you can eat a food. Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE) has a great resource that lists the ingredient names of the top 8 most common food allergies. Go to: [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org).
- To help keep track of foods that you can and cannot have you may want to keep a journal. Take it when you will be eating away from home.
- **Be Prepared! If you are prescribed emergency epinephrine, make sure you have it with you.**

## Choose the restaurant:

- Check the menu before you go
  - Some large chain restaurants have menus and ingredient information online.
  - Many chain restaurants explain how they handle food allergies on their website.
  - If this information is not available online, call the restaurant.
- Call before you go:
  - Ask to talk to the manager or chef.
  - Call the restaurant in between busy meal times. Ask if they can accommodate food allergies.
- Avoid restaurants that you're not so sure of. High risk restaurants include:
  - Buffets. There is a high risk for cross-contamination.
  - Bakeries. There is a high risk for cross-contamination.
  - Restaurants that serve pre-made food. The restaurant may not have the most current list of all ingredients in the food items.

## At the restaurant:

- Ask to talk to the manager. Explain which allergens are being avoided.
- After explaining your restrictions, give them a food allergy restaurant card. This is a card that includes your name, what you are allergic to, and an emergency contact.
  - You can create your own food allergy restaurant cards at the following websites. Some of these websites also let you make cards in other languages.
    1. [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)
    2. [www.selectwisely.com](http://www.selectwisely.com)
    3. [www.allergytranslation.com](http://www.allergytranslation.com)

4. Use any computer program that makes business cards to create your own food allergy restaurant card.

- Keep your meal simple. If you have to ask a lot of questions about the ingredients and how a dish was prepared, it is less likely to be safe. Try ordering a simple meal such as grilled chicken, steamed broccoli, and a plain baked potato. Avoid fried foods - the grill and the frying oil are high risk for cross contamination.
- Always ask questions about ingredients and how foods are prepared.
- Eat dessert at home. A lot of restaurants don't make their desserts. They order them from other stores. The restaurant may not have the most recent ingredient list.
- Be sure to wear your Medical Alert Bracelet!!!
- At the end of your visit, make sure you thank the staff. Building a good relationship with the restaurant will motivate them to help keep you safe in the future.

### Other resources:

Websites:

- [www.allergyeats.com](http://www.allergyeats.com)

iPhone and Android Apps with websites:

- Allergy Eats (iPhone & Android)
- iEatOut Gluten & Allergen Free (iPhone)
- Gluten Free Dining & Travel (Android)
- Find Me Gluten Free (iPhone)
- CeliHack Gluten Free Restaurants Guide for Celiacs (Android)

FARE Resources

- [www.foodallergy.org/resources/dining-out](http://www.foodallergy.org/resources/dining-out)
  - Includes tips such as knowing what to avoid, how to select a restaurant, how to prepare for your restaurant experience, etc.
  - Dining Out with Food Allergies (pdf) available for downloading.
  - Some resources designed specifically for teens.