

DIETARY CONSIDERATIONS/FOOD ALLERGIES

Many of the children that attend asthma camp have food allergies. Most of these are minor and do not pose a significant danger during camp, especially if the foods are eaten at home without problems. However, there are usually a few children who have a history of significant food sensitivity.

While reviewing the camper's application before camp, clarify details of previous reactions with the parent and provide accurate documentation for the camper's chart.

The three most common and potentially dangerous food allergies encountered at camp are milk, egg, and peanut. The allergic reactions associated with these three foods, particularly peanuts, can be quite severe in certain children. Because of this, it is advised that no peanuts of any type, or any item containing peanuts, be used by the camp kitchen for cooking, or be available at camp (e.g. camp store). Milk and eggs are acceptable foods to use at camp, but food allergy patients should always be alerted to dishes that contain milk and eggs. A sign or an announcement should be made at every meal. Other precautions may be necessary to protect the allergic child from milk and egg exposure.

On rare occasion a camper is accepted who, due to significant food allergies, bring their own food to camp. The camp medical director, camp staff and the camp cook must approve this in advance. Careful planning is necessary to ensure the camper has ample food for daily meals, snacks and overnights. To avoid conflict during camp, a signed agreement between the camp and the camper and their parents reinforcing that the special meal plan will be followed can prove helpful.