



### Food Allergy Awareness



An estimated **1 in every 20 adults**, including adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, have allergies to food in the United States (2).





The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) defines food allergies as an undesirable physical reaction by the body's immune response system which occurs due to exposure to a particular food protein (3) (6).

Food allergies can range from a mild reaction, producing a skin rash, to a severe life threatening anaphylaxes response (3).





The level of immune response the individual experiences depends on the severity of the allergy to a particular food protein (1).

#### Signs & Symptoms

Mild food allergy responses can be one or all of the following:

-  **NOSE:** Itchy or runny nose, sneezing
-  **MOUTH:** Itchy mouth
-  **SKIN:** A few hives, mild itch
-  **GUT:** Mild nausea or discomfort

Severe food allergy reactions can be one or all of the following:

-  **LUNG:** Short of breath, wheezing, repetitive cough
-  **HEART:** Pale or bluish skin, faintness, weak pulse, dizziness
-  **THROAT:** Tight or hoarse throat, trouble breathing or swallowing
-  **MOUTH:** Significant swelling of the tongue or lips
-  **SKIN:** Many hives over body, widespread redness
-  **GUT:** Repetitive vomiting, severe diarrhea
-  **OTHER:** Feeling something bad is about to happen, anxiety, confusion

#### The 8 Most Common Foods

The eight most common food allergens found to cause 90% of all allergic reactions (4).

- Cow's milk.
- Hen's eggs.
- Fish.
- Shellfish.
- Soy.
- Wheat.
- Tree nuts.
- Peanuts.



#### Managing Food Allergies

- **Do NOT hesitate to use prescribed medications and seek medical attention by calling 911 if you suspect an allergic reaction is occurring.**
- If an allergic reaction to a particular food is suspected, stop eating any more of that food immediately.
- Allergic reactions generally occur within minutes to a few hours after exposure (4).
- Read all food labels, and avoid cross contact or contamination with the food proteins which produce the allergic reaction (5).
- Monitor all foods consumed by an individual, which can be challenging in various settings.
- Make a list of signs and symptoms the individual may experience or exhibit for early recognition (5).

#### App of the Month



FOODMAESTRO is a free app which answers the question "Can I eat this?" Set up the app with your food allergen(s), and you can then scan barcodes to find out if foods are safe or unsafe. Developed in partnership with the NHS, with over 75,000 users, this app features 133,000 products. You can set up multiple profiles for individual family members with different dietary needs. There is also a partner app for the Low FODMAP diet. <https://www.foodmaestro.me/> (App of the Month is not endorsed by DBHDS Office of Integrated Health. User accepts full responsibility for utilization of app).

#### References

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### ABA Snippets ...

#### ***Are BSPs (Behavioral Support Plans) Comprehensible to DSPs (Direct Service Professionals)?***

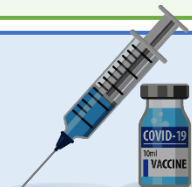
As with many professions, behavior analysis contains its own unique vocabulary that may be difficult for the non-behaviorist to understand. Mands and intraverbals are familiar terms for those schooled in Skinnerian verbal behavior, whereas commonly used words in the daily lexicon such as consequence, discrimination, or even behavior connote a slightly or altogether different meaning in behavior analysis-speak (3). Behaviorists adeptly communicate with one another utilizing scientific dialect; however, such technical jargon may be perceived as off-putting to non-behaviorists and further unintelligible in the context of formalized documentation such as a behavior plan (2) (5). Often, behavior plans are written by Masters or Doctoral level practitioners and are then implemented by direct care staff who may lack the educational background needed to understand the plans (6). Results from research indicate that behavior plans may be written, "Six grade levels higher than the reading level of an average American" (5) and that treatment outcomes are improved when readability levels are appropriately augmented (1). One may also logically surmise that not only readability, but also the length of a behavior support plan itself could negatively impact treatment fidelity. Behaviorists have offered that more concise versions of behavior support plans may be helpful in follow through with front line practitioners (4). It is suggested that to enhance the understanding and implementation of behavior plans that authors are considerate of their audience, both with the expanse and readability of plans they pen.

#### References

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### All Virginians Now Eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine!

Governor Ralph Northam announced on April 1, 2021 that all individuals in Virginia age 16 and older will be eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine starting on Sunday, April 18, 2021.



**What Should I Do Next?** Everyone who lives or works in Virginia should pre-register, in order to receive a notification when a vaccination appointment is available. **To pre-register, visit [vaccinate.virginia.gov](https://vaccinate.virginia.gov) or call 877-VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682, TTY users call 7-1-1).** Assistance is available in English, Spanish, and more than 100 other languages. Videoconferencing in American Sign Language is also available at [vaccinate.virginia.gov](https://vaccinate.virginia.gov). Instructions and FAQ's for the Virginia Statewide Pre-Registration System are below.

**Virginia's Statewide Pre-Registration System** - If you have already submitted a pre-registration form or survey, please click on 'Check the List' to confirm you're pre-registration. Only pre-register once. If you are already in the system, please do not submit another form because this might delay the process. If you experience difficulties with the search function, check the spelling of your name and email address carefully and consider whether you may have used a different name, phone number, or email address in the past. Data from local health department systems is continually being updated, which could delay your pre-registration from showing up in the search function. If you previously pre-registered, your status will not be affected and it is not necessary to pre-register again. If you have questions, please call 877-VAX-IN-VA.

**Sign Up** - Get added to the waitlist. - Your information will be added to the COVID-19 vaccine waitlist. The waitlist will allow us to contact you when you are eligible to schedule an appointment to receive the vaccine.

**Get a Reference Code** - The Reference Code is a unique, auto-generated value that you can use to 'Check the List' for your record (instead of putting in your name and email or phone number). It does not indicate, or have any bearing on, your place in line or your eligibility. Receive updates & a notification when it is your turn to make an appointment. Due to limited supply of vaccines, it may take months before everyone who is eligible can be vaccinated.

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