

# COMMUNITY MARKET

Your Complete Natural Foods Grocery Store

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Your Guide to

## FOOD ALLERGIES

### Allergies & Sensitivities

Many residents of Northern California are familiar with seasonal allergies and symptoms such as runny nose, congestion, and itchy, watery eyes. Though they may not be aware of it, many people's allergies are triggered or intensified by the foods they eat. Food allergies can also result in symptoms such as headaches, constipation or diarrhea, fatigue and mood swings.

The most common food allergens are wheat, gluten, dairy products, peanuts, nuts, and corn. These foods, and products refined from them, are all common ingredients in processed foods. If you have been diagnosed with a food allergy, it is important to know all the names of by-products and additives that are derived from the foods that trigger your response.



Food allergies can develop at any time. They should be distinguished from food intolerances, which are common but produce less intense reactions. If you are concerned about possible food allergies, consult your doctor or holistic health practitioner.

The good news is that there are lots of alternatives to allergenic foods, and Community Market makes a point of stocking items that meet the needs of people with allergies. We also label many of our wheat-free and dairy-free foods.

If you would like a store tour, we encourage you to call for an appointment. We will be more than happy to peruse the aisles with you, answer your questions, and point out products that meet your needs.

#### Dairy

Up to 25% of children and adults suffer from dairy allergies and lactose intolerance, but many go undiagnosed because symptoms can be mild and the causes can be difficult to isolate.

Humans need breast milk until they triple their birth weight (usually by age one). After weaning, the enzyme lactase, which aids in milk digestion, often dissipates from the digestive tract, leading to an intolerance or allergic reaction to dairy.

Digestive disturbances from milk products are most often a sign of lactose intolerance. Signs of an allergic reaction to dairy products most often involve the respiratory system or the skin. Specific reactions may include diarrhea, eczema, vomiting, fatigue, irritability, anemia, acne, a weakened immune system, bronchitis, and ear infections. Chronic ear infections may indicate that your child has dairy sensitivities.

#### Look Out For:

Butter, casein, caseinate, cheese, cream, curds, lactose, lactalbumin, milk, milk solids, nonfat dry milk, whey. Items labeled "dairy-free" may still contain casein as a texture enhancer. Also beware of products with labels reading "may contain traces of dairy products from processing equipment", etc.

#### Wheat

Many people are allergic to wheat, and reactions may range from mild to severe. Although people who are allergic to wheat usually have a reaction to its high gluten levels, they are often able to tolerate lesser amounts of gluten present in other grains.

Because wheat is such a pervasive ingredient, it can be tricky to avoid, but in the past few years wheat free products have become much more available, and labeling has improved as well. Community Market makes a point of stocking as many alternatives as possible in every department.

Most people diagnosed with a wheat allergy have reactions to common wheat (*Triticum Sativum*), and find that they can tolerate relatives of wheat such as spelt and kamut, along with other grains like amaranth, buckwheat, corn, millet, oats, rice, rye, teff, and triticale.

#### Look Out For:

Bran, bulgar, couscous, cracker meal, durum, farina, flour, graham, grain alcohol, (modified) food starch, malt, pasta, seitan, semolina, texturized vegetable protein (TVP), wheat germ, and tamari or soy sauce not specifically labeled wheat-free.

## Gluten

Gluten is a grain protein that occurs in high levels in wheat, and in lower levels in barley, kamut, oats, rye, spelt and triticale. Minute amounts also exist in amaranth, buckwheat, quinoa and teff.

People with gluten allergies must avoid gluten even when it exists in very small quantities. Good alternatives include arrowroot, bean flours, corn starch, nut flours, potato starch, rice and rice flours, tapioca flour, and xanthum gum.

Celiac sprue (gluten-sensitive enteropathy) is a malabsorption syndrome, technically not an allergy, in which the surface of the small intestine is damaged by gliadin, a fraction of the protein gluten. A strictly gluten-free diet is vital to managing this disease, as even tiny amounts of gluten can cause damage.

There are many resources for gluten-free information and recipes, including books, websites, and local health specialists.

### Look Out For:

Everything on the above list for wheat, plus amaranth, barley, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, kamut, oats, rye, spelt, and triticale.

## Nuts and Peanuts

Eliminating nuts and/or peanuts from the diet is simpler than most allergens. Label reading is still an important precaution.

Nut allergies can cause anything from mild unpleasantness to sudden death, even with only trace quantities of nuts.

### Look Out For:

Nut butters and oils. Also be aware of products with labels reading "may contain traces of nuts" or, "processed on equipment also used to process nuts..."

## Corn

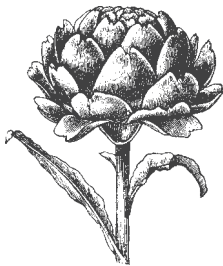
Corn derivatives are incredibly pervasive in the standard American diet, and can pop up in unexpected places. Allergies are more commonly associated with corn derivatives and by-products than with whole corn on the cob. Corn allergies are manageable and can sometimes be reversed with good eating habits.

### Look Out For:

Caramel coloring, cornmeal, corn oil, cornstarch, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, maltodextrin, maltodextrose, masa, and polenta.

## Allergy Basics

Historically, humans have based their diets on whole foods found in nature and minimally processed foods fresh from the farm. Over the last 50 years, the human diet has changed dramatically. With the increase in processed and pre-packaged foods, people are eating fewer whole foods -foods that come with enzymes and minerals that aid in digesting them.



Chemical additives and environmental pollution can also play a role. When the body becomes imbalanced, the results can include allergies, sensitivities, and even chronic disease.

One symptom that all allergies share is inflammation. If it occurs in your brain cells you will most likely have mental and emotional symptoms. In your joints this may mean stiffness or arthritis, and in your lungs this may lead to respiratory problems.

Most people with allergies have a toxic bowel, which prevents the elimination of irritants in the natural way. The body then reverts to other channels of elimination, such as the skin or lungs, which is why allergies cause symptoms such as eczema and asthma.

Cravings for certain foods, followed by feelings of stimulation or euphoria once you satisfy the urge, may indicate a food allergy that your body is managing by preventing withdrawal symptoms. This is a good time to identify and address an allergy before the symptoms worsen.

## Habits for Good Health

- **Resist overeating**, and don't eat too much of a good thing at one sitting.
- **Avoid refined sugar**, as it rapidly depletes the body of minerals and digestive enzymes.
- **Eat your foods whole and unprocessed.**
- **Eat some of your fruits and vegetables raw** -they retain more of their vitamin and enzyme content when uncooked.
- **Diversify your diet.** Repetitive eating habits don't give your body a chance to recover from a food sensitivity.
- **Build up your immune system** with exercise and superfoods such as spirulina, chlorella, herbs and supplements.
- **Avoid aspirin and ibuprofen**, which inflame and damage the intestinal walls.
- **Support balanced body chemistry** through a diverse diet and the aid of certain supplements when necessary.



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### If you have a food allergy:

be sure to check labels on homeopathics and supplements carefully, as they may contain ingredients you need to avoid.