

## Welcoming Guests With Food Allergies to Restaurants

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### Eating Out With Food Allergies is a Challenge, But Everyone Can Do Their Part

With one in 25 Americans reporting a food allergy, restaurants are increasingly likely to have customers who require a special meal. Welcoming Guests With Food Allergies provides tools to train restaurant staff to safely prepare and serve food to guests with food allergies.

"The updated and revised Welcoming Guests guide is an absolute must-have for restaurants and consumers. It manages to be comprehensive while staying user-friendly," said Ming Tsai, chef and owner of Blue Ginger. "Everyone in the food service industry should read this guide - it could save a life."

Available free for download from [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org), this comprehensive program is an updated and revised version of an earlier training program published by the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN). This 60-page guide includes case studies, best practices, up-to-date research, food labeling information, and practical strategies for avoiding cross-contact, as well as suggested procedures for keeping guests safe and steps to prepare for an allergic emergency. Restaurants can use this guide as a basis for their food allergy management programs.

"Studies show that reactions in restaurants are often caused by lack of staff education about food allergy. In a number of situations, the guests did not inform the staff of their allergy. Serving guests with food allergies requires staff education and clear communication between guests and staff," said Anne Munoz-Furlong, Founder and CEO of FAAN. "This training program helps staff achieve those goals so everyone can have an enjoyable and safe restaurant meal."

FAAN originally developed the program in cooperation with the National Restaurant Association (NRA) and its members. According to the NRA, nearly half of the money Americans spend on food is spent in restaurants.

"The National Restaurant Association - and the restaurant industry as a whole - recognizes that food allergies are an important issue and that educating staff is crucial to ensuring proper attention to guests with food allergies," said Sheila Weiss, R.D., director of nutrition policy for the NRA. "We strongly encourage consumers to communicate their food allergies to restaurant staff and discuss concerns and alternatives. Being in the hospitality industry, we want every guest to have a safe and enjoyable experience."

For more information on food allergies or to download Welcoming Guests With Food Allergies, visit <http://www.foodallergy.org/>. A training video for restaurant and food service staff is also available for purchase in English and Spanish.

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