Western's Food Allergy Guide

https://nutrition.uwo.ca/
Food Allergy Canada estimates that approximately 150,000 students enrolled in more than 225 Canadian Universities and Colleges are affected by food allergies. More than 2.6 million Canadians self-report having at least one food allergy.
A food allergy is a medical condition in which exposure to a food triggers a harmful immune response. It occurs because the immune system attacks proteins in the food that are normally harmless. Symptoms can be mild or severe. Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening reaction that can be sudden and result in death if not treated quickly.
Accessing the Risks

TEENS & YOUNG ADULTS

68% Believe education of friends would make living with food allergy easier

51% Tell their friends about their allergy

39% Always carry their auto-injector

but only

60% Always avoid their allergen

~ US studies of teens/young adults with food allergies (2006/2015)

Transition to post-secondary a risky time for students

Larger campus population than average high school

10x Few people know about their food allergies

Living in residence = eating out 3xs/day+

Everything is NEW
At Western, our goal is to foster a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for those students with life-threatening allergies, as well as those without.
Education and awareness around cross-contamination involving food storage and food preparation, is essential. Our food service leadership team have completed an on-line, Food Allergy Canada endorsed, training program (Allergen Training for Food Service and Food Retail Industry and/or Allergy Aware). They are knowledgeable around the importance of food-safety and allergen risk management in the prevention of cross-contamination.
Our over-arching message to students with food allergies is to self-identify. If you have a food allergy (or other dietary restriction), please identify yourself to one of our staff. We will gladly work with you to help identify safe foods. Our Nutrition Manager is also available to help. For questions around allergy accommodations at Western or to schedule a meeting with our team, please submit an "Ask Anne" on-line form or contact the Nutrition Manager directly at: (519) 661-3855 (nutritionservices@uwo.ca)
Emergency Plan

The Food Allergy Emergency Plan Form is a resource that helps our food service staff identify students with specific dietary needs.
Posted in the back-of-house, out of public view, this form helps to ensure all our staff are familiar with students who have allergies, intolerances or other dietary restrictions. It also provides us with information on treatment, symptoms and emergency contacts.

Completed forms can be submitted to the Unit Manager, Supervisor or Chef in early September. The completion of this form, although highly recommended, is entirely optional.

nutrition.uwo.ca/food_allergy_emergency_plan_form.pdf
Food allergies can affect people of all ages; however, they are particularly common in children. **Peanuts, tree nuts, sesame, soy, fish, crustaceans, wheat, eggs, milk and mustard** are the food allergens most commonly associated with severe allergic reactions. These 10 priority allergens are identified at the point-of-purchase in our residence. Additional flags include: Meatless (containing dairy & egg), vegan (containing no ingredients of animal origin), fried and halal options. If in doubt, please inquire as to the safety of your selection. **Allergen management is a shared responsibility.**
Look for these allergy icons at the point-of-purchase in your residence to determine which options are best suited for you.
Western makes every effort to ensure students are placed in a suitable residence.
Room assignments for students with allergies are determined by the Division of Housing and Ancillary Services. If an incoming student requires a residence-based accommodations because of a food allergy (or because of other circumstances), they must complete the Priority Considerations Form found on the Housing Website. 

The information that is provided, supported by appropriate documentation, is then used to assign students to a suitable residence room and offers appropriate supports and accommodations. Dietary information is shared with the Nutrition Manager working with Hospitality Services.
Preparing for University
The move from home to a post-secondary setting is often a challenging transition for students. For many, it means living away from home for the first time, accessing meals through campus food service, navigating new systems in communities and meeting many new people. In addition, first-year students with food allergies have the responsibility of managing their medical condition in a new, and less controlled environment than the one they may be accustomed to.
Tips for Students at Risk for Anaphylaxis

- Identify yourself to Western's Hospitality Services Team, your Residence Manager and your Don and RA. You're NOT in it alone.
- Complete a Food Allergy Emergency Plan Form and Submit it to the Unit Manager, Supervisor or Chef.
- Always carry an epinephrine auto-injector (e.g., EpiPen).
- Wear medical identification (e.g., MedicAlert bracelet or necklace).
- Carry a cellphone and ensure that it is charged to call for assistance, if needed.
- Educate others (e.g., roommates or suitemates, floormates, classmates, and teammates).
- Know what you're allergic to and the symptoms that may present if a reaction were to occur.
- Ask questions about ingredients and the potential of cross-contamination
- Administer epinephrine at the first sign of a known or suspected anaphylactic reaction.
- Seek assistance. Call 9-1-1 from a campus phone to dispatch the Student Emergency Response Team (SERT).
Western's Student Emergency Response Team (SERT) is a student run, volunteer organization providing emergency medical response to 9-1-1 calls on Main Campus, Brescia University College, and Huron College Campuses. They provide service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during the academic school year and 8:30-4:30 weekday service from May to August. They are dispatched through the Campus Community Police Service (CCPS) to any medical emergency on-campus, responding in three person co-ed teams. The SERT team is equipped with an adult and childrens doses of stock auto injector epi-pens.

More about SERT (temporarily suspected due to COVID-19)
You are not alone in dealing with your allergy. Many students at Western have allergies, intolerances and/or other dietary restrictions. We are here to help you successfully manage your allergy and help familiarize you with campus resources. At Western, our goal is to foster a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for those students with life-threatening allergies, as well as those without.
For more information on Western's Food Allergy Policy and Procedures, please contact the Nutrition Manager at:
nutritonservices@uwo.ca
(519) 661-3855
The mission of the National Food Allergy Action Plan is to help Canadians with food allergy live safely and confidently, and advance prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of food allergy.