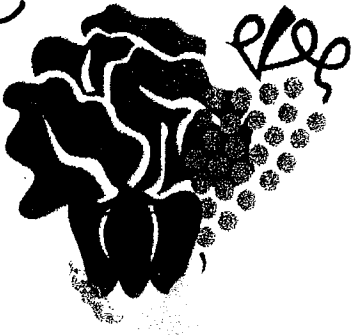


We  
are nut  
free



# Nutrition Matters

Nutrition Services | Health Services Department

## PEANUT/NUT SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

### Why has my child asked me to avoid sending peanut and/or nut products for lunches and snacks?

Most likely, there are children in the school, daycare or camp who have a peanut/nut allergy. Peanut/nut allergies can be severe and may be fatal. Even tiny amounts of peanut/nut particles or residue can cause someone with a peanut/nut allergy to have a strong reaction. Without treatment, this person could die within minutes. "Peanut/Nut-Safe" environments can only be achieved when everyone is committed. That's why your help and cooperation are very important.

### Why am I being asked to avoid sending both peanuts and nuts?

Peanuts are *not* the same as other nuts because they are actually members of the legume family. Other nuts such as walnuts, cashews, almonds, etc., are "tree" nuts. However, one third of children with peanut allergies have a "tree nut" allergy as well<sup>1</sup>. Also, peanuts are often processed in facilities which pack "tree nuts", so there is a risk that "tree nuts" may carry some peanut protein residue on them. Some children are so sensitive to peanuts, that even this small amount may present a problem for them.

### What do I do?

The most important thing you can do is to avoid sending any foods from home that may contain peanuts and/or nuts. Check the ingredient list for **peanut oil, peanut butter, peanut sauce, peanut flour, peanut meal, mixed nuts, ground nuts, goober nuts, goober peas, artificial nuts and mandalona nuts**. There are many hidden sources of peanuts/nuts in foods. Some examples include cookies, chocolate, granola bars, some cereal bars, and some vegetable oils and shortening.

### How do I know if a food contains peanuts or nuts?

- ✓ Read the labels to see if peanuts/nuts are present.
- ✓ Check the list of ingredients **each time** you buy a product. Remember, ingredients may change.
- ✓ Look for "may contain peanuts/nuts" on the label.
- ✓ Try to avoid products that do not carry a list of ingredients.
- ✓ Imported, non-Canadian products have different labeling requirements, so read the label carefully when choosing these products.

<sup>1</sup>Weisnagel, J. [www.allerg.qc.ca/peanutallergy.htm](http://www.allerg.qc.ca/peanutallergy.htm), 1998