



Ten Questions You Need to Ask When Dining Out with Food Allergies

This is written for parent of a child with food allergies. If you have food allergies yourself, adjust as needed.

To the Host/Hostess:

- 1. Can you accommodate people with food allergies?**
- 2. Do you receive training about food allergies and how to avoid cross-contact?**

If the answer to these two questions is yes, continue. If no, find an alternative place to eat.

When the waiter first greets the table:

- 3. Hi my name is _____. This is my child, _____. He/she has food allergies. Can I speak to the chef and/or a manager about meal options?**

To chef or manager:

Hi, nice to meet you. My name is _____. This is my child, _____. He/she is allergic to _____. We have checked the menu and we think the (insert menu item) might work.

- 4. Is this made in-house?** If yes, skip to Question #6
- 5. Do you have the labels available for me to read?** Never rely on the staff to read labels for you. If labels are not available, do not order the item.
- 6. What are the ingredients in this dish?**
- 7. Is there anything else added to this dish? (spices, sauces, condiments)**
- 8. How is this meal prepared? ***
- 9. Can it be made in a separate pan with separate utensils, etc...?**
- 10. Can it be made without (state specific allergen(s))?**

When the food arrives, always ask again how it was prepared before eating. The protocol in restaurants with allergy training is to serve the meal separately and to state how the food was prepared when placing the meal at the table.

*Beware of anything fried or made on the grill. If something is usually prepared on the grill, ask that it be made in a separate pan. Unless the restaurant has a dedicated fryer it will not be safe to consume food cooked in the fryer due to cross-contact. (Ask: What kind of oil do you use? Is anything else fried in that fryer?) Be sure you feel comfortable with the answers you receive or find another restaurant. You should always speak to a manager or chef and ask questions about cross-contact and preparation. If you feel at all uncomfortable about the answers you receive, the safest option is to leave.



Written by Gina Mennett Lee, M.Ed. This content originally appeared on Gina's blog at FoodAllergyEdNetwork.org.

© Copyright 2014 Mennett Lee, LLC. All rights reserved.