



Travel Tips

World Travel with Food Allergies

*Especially for you from Allergy Force
—the food allergy management app*



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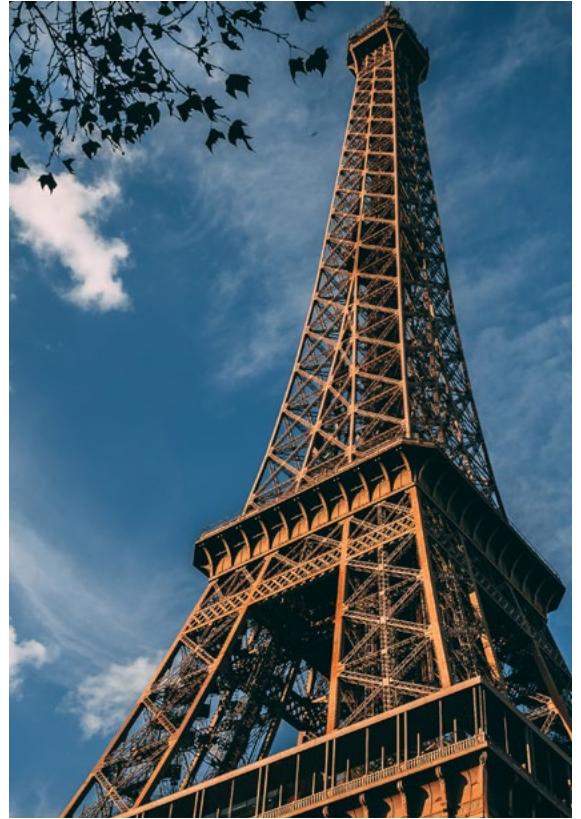
INTRODUCTION: THE WORLD IS YOURS

It IS possible to travel the world safely with severe food allergies. The key to traveling safely is advance legwork to research, plan, organize and communicate your needs.

If you are looking forward to time away and new adventures, but you or a loved one has food allergies that give you cause for pause, then this e-book is for you. You'll find it helpful whether:

- You are brand new to international travel and want to be sure you cross t's and dot i's to safeguard your wellbeing during your travels;
- You only venture to far flung destinations on occasion and need a refresh on thinking it all through; OR
- You're an experienced globe trotter – a 'have passport; will travel' sort — and just want to sanity check plans.

It will help you think through what to ask, what to do and when to do it, as well as provide helpful resources that are just a click away. We've included a handy checklist at the end you can use to track and cross off "to do's" as you count down to departure day.



PHASE I: TRIP PLANNING

Getting Started

To do lists are helpful to keep you organized. Paper works, or a digital app could be helpful, too. Top apps that could help you get organized can be found in articles from [Digital Trends](#) and [nTask](#).

Researching Destinations

This is the fun part of planning your trip, thinking through where to go. Are you in the mood for museums, exploring urban sprawl and nightlife? Or are you dreaming about tropical breezes and white sand beaches? Or a little of both?

Key things to think about when targeting an international destination with food allergies:

- 1. Getting to Your Destination:** Are direct flights possible or will getting there require a series of layovers and connecting flights? In general, how long are flights to the destination? <5? Between 5 and 10? >10?
- 2. Communication:** Is the destination a common tourist destination? Will locals be accustomed to dealing with tourists? What is the local language? Can I speak the local language? Can I read the local language? If not, how will I communicate my food allergies when I visit?
- 3. Local Cuisine:** What kind of cuisine is typically found in the country I am visiting? For example, travel to France can be challenging with egg and dairy allergies. Travel to India can be challenging with allergies to chickpeas and lentils. And peanuts will be a concern in Thailand and China.

THINKING IT THROUGH:

*Is the local cuisine dairy-intensive?
Is it wheat intensive? Are peanuts
commonly added to local dishes? Are
other legumes? What about tree nuts?
Which tree nuts? Is use of sesame
common? What about eggs? What
about soy? What about fish or shell
fish in local dishes?*



- 4. Food Labeling:** How does food labeling work in the country I am visiting? Some countries specifically identify top allergens by menu item using icons. Do my target countries have a system like this? Or some other system?
- 5. Healthcare:** How developed is the healthcare system? Do the towns I plan to stay in have a hospital? Are emergency services accessible? Does the country have an emergency call network? How would I access it?

Resources to help you evaluate and zero in on your destination:

For country-level research:

- Start with local tourism resources/offices: <https://bit.ly/2HTFVJZ>
- Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE): <https://bit.ly/2OLtSzn>
- International Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Alliance: <https://bit.ly/2HSUXQr>
- Allergy Travels: <https://bit.ly/2Y0AYaJ>
- Hotel staff/management at the hotels you contact

And preparing ahead for an emergency:

- A list of in-country emergency call numbers to help you with your research: <https://bit.ly/1MgFWnj>

And when you don't speak the language, find some tools!

Print out restaurant allergy explanation cards in your own language, or in the local languages you will meet on the road. Or, download a translation app to your phone. Or both.



Here are app suggestions and other resources to help:

Tech Resources that can help:

- Allergy Force (app): <http://www.allergyforce.com/>
- Allergic Traveler (app): <http://allergictravelerapp.com/>
- Allergy Smartz (app): <https://foodallergylowdown.com/allergysmartz/>
- Assure Tech Mobile App (app): <https://www.assuretech-mobile-app.com/>

Some Downloadable/Printable Resources for you, as well:

- Allergy Translation (printed cards): <https://allergytranslation.com/>
- Allergic Traveler (cards to order): <https://www.allergictraveler.net/>
- FARE (downloadable chef cards): <https://bit.ly/2CIUV9B>
- Food Allergy Translate (allergy card): <https://bit.ly/2UDBPf7>
- Select Wisely (printed allergy cards): <https://www.selectwisely.com/>

Researching Hotels & Resorts



Beyond location-location-location and affordability, will your accommodations be food allergy friendly? Where will you stay during your visit? Will a hotel be comfortable? Or a resort? Or an Airbnb? Or will you borrow a friend's flat?

Key things to consider when figuring out hotels & resorts with food allergies:

1. Where to Stay?: What kind of accommodations will I seek? What can my budget handle? Are amenities important? Or, are a clean bed and shower all that matter? Is proximity to tourist attractions important? Or is sanctuary from hustle and bustle what I need?

Online websites like [TripAdvisor](#) and [Booking.com](#) can be particularly helpful to narrow down your hotel/resort options, as can trusted travel agents.

Take time to read online reviews by other travelers, and scan the photos on travelers' posts. The hotel PR machine will never show you the tired lobby that seriously needs a refresh, or the mildew on the shower tiles, or the stained carpets in the rooms.

You should consider having a separate conversation(s) with the hotel/resort restaurant manager/chef and any recommended restaurants in advance of booking your rooms.

2. Fact Finding Conversations: Beyond your online research, it's important to call the targeted hotel or resort and speak with a manager about your food allergy needs.

Staff at the hotel should be able to answer questions about the food allergies that are common to the region, and give you a sense of whether your native language is spoken in the area, the hotel's proximity to a hospital, and how emergency call numbers work in the country.

They should be able to make an introduction to the hotel/resort restaurant manager/chef if the hotel has a restaurant. They should also be able to recommend restaurants in the vicinity so you can do advance research.

3. Specific Room Requests: Ask if your room accommodations be sanitized with extra care to ensure that any traces of food from prior occupants are removed.

Also request that the hotel staff not bring any food items into your room, either as a welcome gift, or as sweet dream treats. If the hotel provides an in-room assortment of snacks for purchase, request that they be removed before you occupy the room.

And don't be shy about asking if microwaves and fridges might be available in the rooms. Let the quality of the hotel/resort be your guide on this.

Resources to help you zero in on the best hotel/resort for your needs:

Go Online:

Traveler reviews, ratings and posted photos are rich sources for intel on your target hotels/resorts from the inside out. This is not the time to be seduced by glossy images from the hotels/resorts' PR machines.

Speak to Hotel/Resort Staff:

However, beyond your independent online research, you really do need to speak to hotel/resort staff to ask specific questions about how they can accommodate a food allergic traveler.

You will gain much insight from these conversations – as much from what is explained, as from what is left unanswered.

Some Places to Start:

- Start with local tourism resources/offices: <https://bit.ly/2HTFVJZ>
- Trip Advisor: <https://www.tripadvisor.com/>
- Booking.com: <https://www.booking.com>
- Management staff at the target hotels and resorts

We were invited to a close relative's wedding at a resort in Mexico. Our son has multiple, severe food allergies and we were extremely worried (the losing sleep kind) about traveling to a country where we didn't speak the language. When we booked our rooms, the resort manager put us directly in touch with the head chef at the restaurant. Our conversation with the chef put us at ease. He was knowledgeable about food allergies and the risks food and kitchen management could pose for a severely (anaphylactic) food allergic person. Before we arrived the chef even bought new pots and pans which he used exclusively when preparing our son's food during our stay. We were incredibly grateful to the head chef and resort, and were able to stress less and have fun.

— *Tracie Grindeland — Food Allergy Mom*



Booking Flights

There are no uniform industry-wide policies for handling food allergies on planes. For this reason, the way airlines handle travelers with food allergies varies greatly.

Every airline is different and some are more helpful than others. Some do not serve nuts as a standard policy, others still serve dry roasted peanuts and sell products with peanut ingredients. Some will make cabin announcements, create a buffer zone or allow pre-boarding. Others do not. For every 'good' flight on an airline, you may experience something quite different on another flight on the same airline. Your experience may even vary across cabin classes on the same flight.

When you fly, you are pretty much at the mercy of the airline you've selected. But that being said, there are advance planning steps you can take to increase your odds of a safe (and even pleasant) flight.

For example, when booking international travel with Swiss Air in the past, the airline asked for a Doctor's letter explaining the medical condition. During the flight, the Cabin Crews created generous buffer zones for our family. But we've found ourselves on a LA to NYC flight with Delta, and despite being informed of our son's allergies, the Cabin Crew served dry roasted peanuts and sold Snickers Bars during the six-hour flight. By the time we deplaned, our son had symptoms that were thankfully resolved with a dose of Benadryl in baggage claim once we connected the dots. Fortunately we connected the dots.

“ *Humans like predictability, but air travel is inherently unpredictable. Airlines are consistently inconsistent.* — [Lianne Mandelbaum, Founder, No Nut Traveler](#) ”

Key things to think about and explore when booking flights:

1. Fact Finding Conversations: Contact the airline in advance before confirming tickets. Discuss your allergies and their food allergy policies with them. Request that this conversation be documented and provided to the Cabin Crew and Gate Agent.

2. Accommodations: Request accommodations (not the 'hotel' kind.) Possible accommodations to request:

- Making the flight peanut free/nut free—no peanuts/tree nuts served, no peanuts/tree nut products sold in flight.
- Pre-ordering an allergen free meal, if available.
- Pre-boarding to sanitize the seating area.
- Creating a 'no peanut/no tree nut' buffer zone of least one to two rows in front and behind the allergic passenger's row.
- Making an on-plane announcement about the allergy situation -- requesting passengers to refrain from eating foods with peanuts/tree nuts for the duration of the flight.

3. Flight Strategies: Try to book direct flights, if possible. With direct flights you will only have to brief the Gate Agent and the Cabin Crew once, and you will only need to sanitize your seating area once.

Choose your time of travel carefully. Try to book first-flight-out in the morning flights. The equipment may be cleaned more thoroughly during overnight layovers than it is cleaned during quick turnaround layovers throughout the day.

Window seats are a great choice for food allergic travelers – a friend or family member can buffer you from an unknown seatmate. You are also more sheltered from food traveling the aisle.

“ Research has shown that communicating your allergies and requesting accommodations may reduce the probability of an inflight allergic reaction. — [Kids with Food Allergies](#) ”

Resources to help you evaluate airlines' food allergy policies:

In Part 382 of the Code of Federal Regulations – Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability in Air Travel – [Section §382.93](#) states that carriers “must offer preboarding to passengers with a disability who self-identify at the gate as needing additional time or assistance to board, stow accessibility equipment, or be seated.”

[In a decision published May 16, 2019, the DOT determined that Passengers with severe nut allergies are passengers with disabilities for purposes of Part 382.](#) As per the DOT, “When a passenger with a severe allergy asks for preboarding to wipe down seating surfaces, he or she is requesting additional time “to be seated,” because from the passenger’s perspective, the seating area cannot be safely accessed until it is wiped down. Accordingly, we have reason to believe that when an airline fails to allow passengers with severe nut allergies to preboard to wipe down seating surfaces, it violates section 382.93.”

In the preamble to Part 382, the DOT indicates that (“an allergy may or may not rise to the level of a disability, depending on severity. The fact that someone may have a stuffy nose or sneeze when exposed to dog or cat dander does not necessarily mean that the individual has a disability.”) “In contrast, an allergy that “produces shock or respiratory distress that could require emergency or significant medical treatment” would rise to the level of a disability.”

There are a number of resources that can help you evaluate an airline’s food allergy policies, and even an evolving customer review and rating website where you can see other food allergic travelers’ posts about their airline experiences.

- Allergic Living’s Airlines and Allergy Policies Directory: <https://bit.ly/2lpYVwl>
- Allergic Living’s allergy policy comparison across 13 major air carriers: <https://bit.ly/2a6H95E>
- Policies of large US airlines on the serving of Nuts: <https://bit.ly/2FHxfy9>
- Filing a complaint with the US DOT*: <https://bit.ly/1Ogu4gU>

* DOT = Department of Transportation



Consulting the Doctor & Filling Prescriptions



Consult your Doctor before you travel abroad to discuss risks associated with flying, to renew expired medications, to obtain back-up medication and to gather documentation for Security and Gate Agents at the airport.



The limited availability and cost of epinephrine auto-injectors (EAI's) can be prohibitive, so it may not be practical to travel with more than 2 EAI's. If it is not practical, then request back-up prescriptions from your Doctor for any prescription refills during the trip.

Key things to cover with your Doctor before your trip:

1. Viable Medication: Double check the expiration dates on your epinephrine auto-injectors (EAI's) and antihistamine. If the expiration dates have passed, ask your Doctor for a new prescription and replace the EAI's and any expired antihistamine before your trip.

2. Enough Medication: How many EAI's should you take on a trip? Consult with your Doctor on this and follow your Doctor's recommendation. Make sure you fill your EAI prescriptions for the trip well in advance in the event EAI supplies are limited.

Doctors often recommend having access to two EAI's at all times, since it is possible a single dose of epinephrine may not fully stop an allergic reaction, or the reaction may start again (biphasic) several hours/days after the initial onset, requiring a second shot of epinephrine.

Since it may be difficult to replace EAI's while traveling, if you've used your pair, having at least one spare pair could be important. Depending on where you are traveling (e.g., more developed vs. less developed, urban vs. rural setting) and the duration of your trip, take at least two, but discuss taking between 4 and 8 viable EAI's with your Doctor.

When my son went to Spain for a 1-week middle school class trip, he traveled with 4 epinephrine auto-injectors. He carried two and the chaperones carried two. We carefully reviewed how to identify an anaphylactic reaction, how to use EAI's and a list of unsafe foods with the chaperones before the trip.

— Donna DeCosta, MD — Food Allergy Mom and Founder of [FoodASC \(The Food Allergy & Sensitivity Circle\)](#) and the [E3 Method \(3 Steps to Empowering Your Child with Food Allergies\)](#)

3. Documentation for Security & Gate Agents: Ask your Doctor for a letter that confirms you are fit to fly, explains your food allergies and lists the medications required to treat any allergic reactions. This documentation could be helpful when clearing Security and for the Gate Agent conversation.

Resources to help your Doctor:

Templates may make it easier for your Doctor to supply the requested documentation. Here are some:

- From [FARE's International Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Alliance](#)
- From [SelectWisely](#) that can be printed out in different languages.

Be sure to read through the templates before you give them to your Doctor. You will want to be comfortable with the content.

Other Advance Planning Steps

1. Share Your Travel Plans: Be sure to communicate your plans and emergency care needs clearly and widely. Make sure family and friends who will not travel with you are familiar with your travel plans.

Also make sure the family and friends you travel with know about your food allergies, and know where you will keep your medication, how to use your EAI and where you will keep your Emergency Care Plan.

Though this may feel a bit “big brother-ish” or “stalk-ish”, consider having your family download a tracking app that everyone shares, so they know your whereabouts and you know theirs. There are some user friendly tools for this like the *Find My Friends* app for [Apple](#) and [Android](#) and the *Life360 GPS Locator & Tracker* app, also for [Apple](#) and [Android](#). Think of these tracking apps as hugs from afar and have reassurance that your loved ones have your back, even when they are not close by.

2. Medical Alert Identification: Consider ordering a medical alert id (bracelet or necklace) that you wear throughout your trip. There is a wide variety available from [Medic Alert](#), [American Medical ID](#), and ones designed especially for children from [AllerMates](#).

3. Mobile Phone International Coverage: Contact your wireless carrier and modify your plan to include international calling and texting. You will want to be able to make local and emergency calls in the country(ies) you visit. You may need to use data to locate a hospital or quickly connect to emergency services. You will want to note the [country-specific emergency call numbers](#) at your destination and be aware of any country-specific emergency procedures.

4. Travel Insurance: Travel Health insurance is available in some countries and may cover hospital visits resulting from anaphylactic reactions. Note that it may not be available in your home country.

“ *Planning a trip when you have food allergies is a process. Lots of unknowns. But it's only a small investment of time and patience relative to the lifetime of memories you will create.* — [Gayle Rigione, CEO & Co-founder, Allergy Force](#) ”

Packing Food Allergy Essentials



Beyond clothes and toiletries (sunscreen and sunglasses?), you will want to spend some thoughtful time packing your food allergy essentials. Do not wait to the last minute to organize and pack these items.

Summarized below are Carry-on Must Haves:

1. Documentation: In addition to your passport/national identity card, you will want to organize the following into a folder that you can quickly access at the airport, as needed:

- Your Doctor's letter explaining you are fit to travel and that you require medication with you at all times (your EAI's, your back up EAI's, liquid antihistamine). This letter is for Security and the Gate Agents. Usually Security will not question your medication, but it is useful to have a current prescription list with you in a note from the Doctor, in case of any concerns. Note that all prescription medications should have their pharmacy labels and non-prescription antihistamine should have the original packaging.
- Your back-up prescriptions.
- At least two copies of [your Emergency Care Plan](#) — one for yourself, one for a trusted travel companion.
- Insurance cards (these would most relevant in your home country.)
- If you are a minor traveling without your parents, ask your parents for a letter of parental consent to receive medical attention in an emergency.
- A print out of your emergency contacts, including your Doctor — with their names, phone numbers (mobile numbers for texts is important) and email addresses.
- 2 to 3 print outs of your allergy explanation card for restaurants if you decide to use hard copies versus an app on your phone. (You might want to email the explanation card file to yourself in case you lose your hard copies and want to print out replacements.)
- A printout of your airline's policies, if they publish it.

2. Snacks & Meals for The Journey: Airlines might offer milk-free or nut-free meals, but if you have multiple food allergies be wary. Also, the risk of cross contact on planes is high given the cramped quarters the Cabin Crew works in to heat and serve meals.

What to do? We recommend that you bring all your own snacks and food for your travel day and eat only that food.

How much to bring? Plan for every meal you will eat on the plane, plus snacks for flight departure waits. Bring extra since flights can be delayed or diverted.



What to bring? You should only pack foods you have safely eaten before. This is definitely not the time to experiment. The US TSA publishes regulations that govern [foods and beverages you can bring on the plane](#). Suggestion: since the TSA may scrutinize the foods in your carry-on, put it in clear Ziploc bags so they can clearly see it, without touching it directly.

When my youngest son (who is severely allergic to multiple foods) wanted to join a middle school trip to Spain, I involved him early in the trip preparations. My son chose snacks he could pack compactly in case he didn't have safe options during a layover in Lisbon, or wasn't able to eat some of the local foods. Snacks of choice included cookies, bars, tuna pouches and cured olives (liquid-free), all of which he'd eaten safely before. My son packed the snacks in his carry-on and checked bag. In retrospect, I had my son pack too many snacks for the trip, bringing much of it home. Hindsight is 20/20, though, so I'd rather he brought too much versus going hungry.

— Donna DeCosta, MD — *Food Allergy Mom and Founder of [FoodASC \(The Food Allergy & Sensitivity Circle\)](#) and the [E3 Method \(3 Steps to Empowering Your Child with Food Allergies\)](#)*

3. Your Medication: You should carry-on all your allergy medication (EAI's, liquid antihistamine and all your spare EAI's.) If you check your medication it may be destroyed by the low temperature in the cargo hold. We recommend that you pack your medication into a small bag that holds everything and fits neatly into a larger carry-on bag.

All prescription medications should have their original pharmacy labels. You can subdivide your antihistamine into smaller containers under 100ml, but be sure to keep the original packaging if you subdivide the antihistamine. Note that larger bottles are allowed for medical purposes. If you plan to subdivide liquid antihistamine, you can find containers from [Allergy Superheroes](#) and [Allermates](#).

4. Cleaning Supplies: Bring wipes to wipe down your assigned seating area. The wipes should contain bleach. Hand sanitizers will not do the job. You should also bring hand wipes and hand sanitizer, though studies have shown that hand sanitizer alone is not enough to remove all allergen traces from your hands. Hand washing is still best.

5. Protective Barriers: Consider packing an airplane seat cover. We have found several, offered in [white](#) or [black](#). You should also bring your own [lightweight blanket and travel pillow](#). Amazon offers a number of [options](#).

PHASE 2: DEPARTURE & TRAVEL DAY



Key things to keep top of mind as you leave home, travel to the airport and head for the departure gate:

So, the big day — Departure Day — has finally arrived after days, weeks, months of planning.

1. Do A Final Check: In the scramble to get out the door to the airport, do not forget to do a last-minute check of your carry-on items before you lock the door and hit the road.

2. Allow Plenty of Time for Travel to The Airport: Assume there will be traffic and unforeseen delays on the road. Assume there will be long lines at Security. Allowing sufficient travel times will reduce your stress levels and help you be clear headed and mindful during the journey.

3. Clearing Security: When you go through Security, Security may question you regarding your medications. Make sure you have quick access to your Doctor's letter stating your medical condition and the medications you require. Make sure all your medications have their prescription labels, and for over the counter medication, the original packaging is helpful, even if you've subdivided liquid the medication.

4. Waiting for Departure: As you wait for departure be mindful of the things you touch in the waiting areas and the restrooms. Wash and sanitize hands frequently. If you are hungry or suffer from the munchies, eat from your personal food stash before and during the flight. Do not buy food in the terminal at the food courts, snack shops, or full-service restaurants before boarding a flight.

5. Gate Agent Conversation: Speak with the Gate Agent to make sure the Gate Agent is aware of your allergies and is aware of the accommodations you requested when you booked your tickets. Provide you Doctor's letter if necessary. Ask the Gate Agent to communicate this information to the Cabin Crew. Reconfirm your pre-boarding status so you can sanitize your seating area before takeoff.

On a recent trip, my family did not have time to eat before heading to the airport to catch an overnight flight. With a long international flight ahead, we ate dinner at an airport restaurant. For safety reasons (my brother was traveling elsewhere on a school trip), my parents had booked separate flights, pairing my dad with me and my mom with my sister. I have multiple food allergies. During the flight I became severely ill, throwing up throughout the flight. Was it an allergic reaction? Or not? Had I somehow eaten an allergen during the restaurant meal? Would I need my EpiPen? Would two EpiPens be enough? I wasn't sure. My dad wasn't sure. The flight was long. The uncertainty was excruciating. It was only when my family reunited that we discovered my mom and I had experienced the same illness through the night on our separate flights. Conclusion? NOT an allergic reaction, but a virus or food poisoning. Relief!

— Ryan R. — College Student

The takeaway? If you have severe food allergies, **do not** eat any food purchased at the airport before boarding a flight. **Do not** introduce more uncertainty into your travels.



Key things to keep top of mind once you board and during your flight:

Here's your stay safe playbook once you've boarded your flight....

- 1. Enlist The Cabin Crew As Allies:** As soon as you are on board, explain your allergy/allergies to the Cabin Crew. Make sure the crew knows where you will keep your medications, in the event of an inflight emergency.
- 2. Sanitize Your Seating Area:** At your seat, sanitize the seating area with wipes, with extra attention paid to the window ledge, tray table, seat belt, arm rests, seat itself, the surfaces surrounding outlets for charging laptops and mobile phones and adjacent seats. Don't be embarrassed to pull out and use a disposable seat cover. Hopefully you got a window seat, so you are buffered by a family member or friend who takes the middle seat and/or aisle seat.
- 3. Be Opportunistic:** If the plane is not full and rows are empty, sometimes the Cabin Crew will allow you to switch seats to an empty row just before takeoff. If you don't ask, you won't know, so don't be hesitant to make the ask. If you change seats do not forget to thoroughly sanitize the seating area.

4. Stow Medication Within Reach: Be sure to keep your medications stowed under the seat in front of you and not tucked away in the overhead storage bin. You always want your medications within easy reach.

5. Make Friends: Explain your allergies to anyone sitting next to you.

6. Use Your Own Pillow & Blanket: Get comfy for a long haul with your own pillow and blanket. Avoid using pillows and blankets supplied by the airline.

7. Minimize Surfaces You Touch: In flight, be mindful of touching commonly touched surfaces on the plane with bare hands (e.g., bathroom door handles and overhead storage bin handles.) Either use a wipe to open these or wash your hands after touching them.

8. Only Eat What You Brought: Do not eat the food offered by the airline. Bring your own supply of snacks and meals to consume before and during the flight. For example, some instant/freeze dried meals only need hot water to become a quick, warm and satisfying meal.

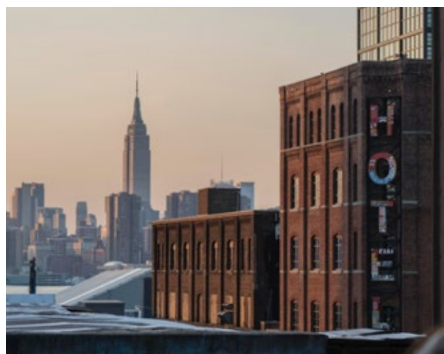
9. Follow Your Emergency Care Plan!: If you feel you are having an allergic reaction, follow your Emergency Care Plan ASAP and alert the Cabin Crew.

10. Be Grateful: Be kind and respectful to the Cabin Crew during the flight. When you deplane, be sure to thank them for making it a safe flight for you.

“ Oh the places you'll go. — Dr. Seuss ”



PHASE 3: DESTINATION ARRIVAL



You are almost there. You've successfully navigated the trip to your destination and are just minutes away from relaxation and adventures...

Key things to keep top of mind once you've arrived at your hotel/resort:

1. Checking In: When you arrive at your hotel/resort and check-in, speak directly with the hotel or resort manager. At this time, you will want to introduce yourself and the guest in your party with food allergies.

- Reconfirm that your room was cleaned with extra care to remove any traces of food from prior occupants.
- You will also want to make sure that any in-room snacks for purchase have been removed.
- Remind the hotel that no food items should be brought into your room by hotel staff, either as well-intentioned welcome gifts, or good night treats.

2. Round 2: After you have unpacked and settle in a bit, revisit the hotel manager or concierge. This is the time to:

- Request a personal introduction to the hotel or resort restaurant manager or head chef. Ideally, this personal introduction would be a follow-on conversation to a phone conversation you had previously when planning the trip.
- Seek recommendations on restaurants in the vicinity of your hotel or resort, if you have not already done so.
- Request help making restaurant reservations and explaining your allergies to the targeted restaurant manager/owner/chef in the local language.
- If you have not downloaded a translation app for the trip, this is the time to ask the hotel/resort for help translating your printed allergy explanation into the local language. Once translated, the hotel should be able to provide you with several copies of the translated original.

3. Have fun! Happy adventures!



TOP TIPS TO KEEP TOP OF MIND

Travel is a process, but the joys of travel, the lifetime memories you create and the connection to different people, history and cultures will enrich your life beyond measure.

Don't forget to pack your sense of humor and your ability to keep travel trials and tribulations in perspective.

1. Keep Calm and Carry On: Remember that travel requires flexibility. You can plan every detail to the nth degree and there will always be hiccups.

2. Communicate! Communicate! Communicate!: Communication is essential at all times during your trip. People don't know what you don't communicate. You can never over-communicate with food allergies. Wash-Rinse-Repeat!

- Tell the hotel about your allergies when you book
- Tell the airline about your allergies when you book
- Explain when you check-in at the airport if you speak with an agent vs. self-check-in
- Explain again to the Gate Agent
- Explain again to the Cabin Crew
- Explain everything to the check-in person at your hotel and resort, as well as the manager
- Explain again to the restaurant manager or chef.

3. Be proactive to reduce your risk: A study -- led by author and pediatrician Matthew Greenhawt MD, MBA, MSc of the University of Michigan's Food Allergy Center and C.S. Mott Children's Hospital -- found that survey respondents significantly lowered the probability of an allergic reaction on flights when they:

1. Requested any kind of special accommodation
2. Consumed only peanut/tree nut-free meals
3. Wiped tray tables
4. Brought and used their own blankets and pillows
5. Had buffer zones created around them where peanut/tree nut products could not be consumed
6. Requested other passengers not to consume peanut/tree nut-containing products
7. Had the Cabin Crew make an announcement requesting that passengers not eat peanut/tree nut-containing products during the flight
8. Avoided eating any airline-provided food

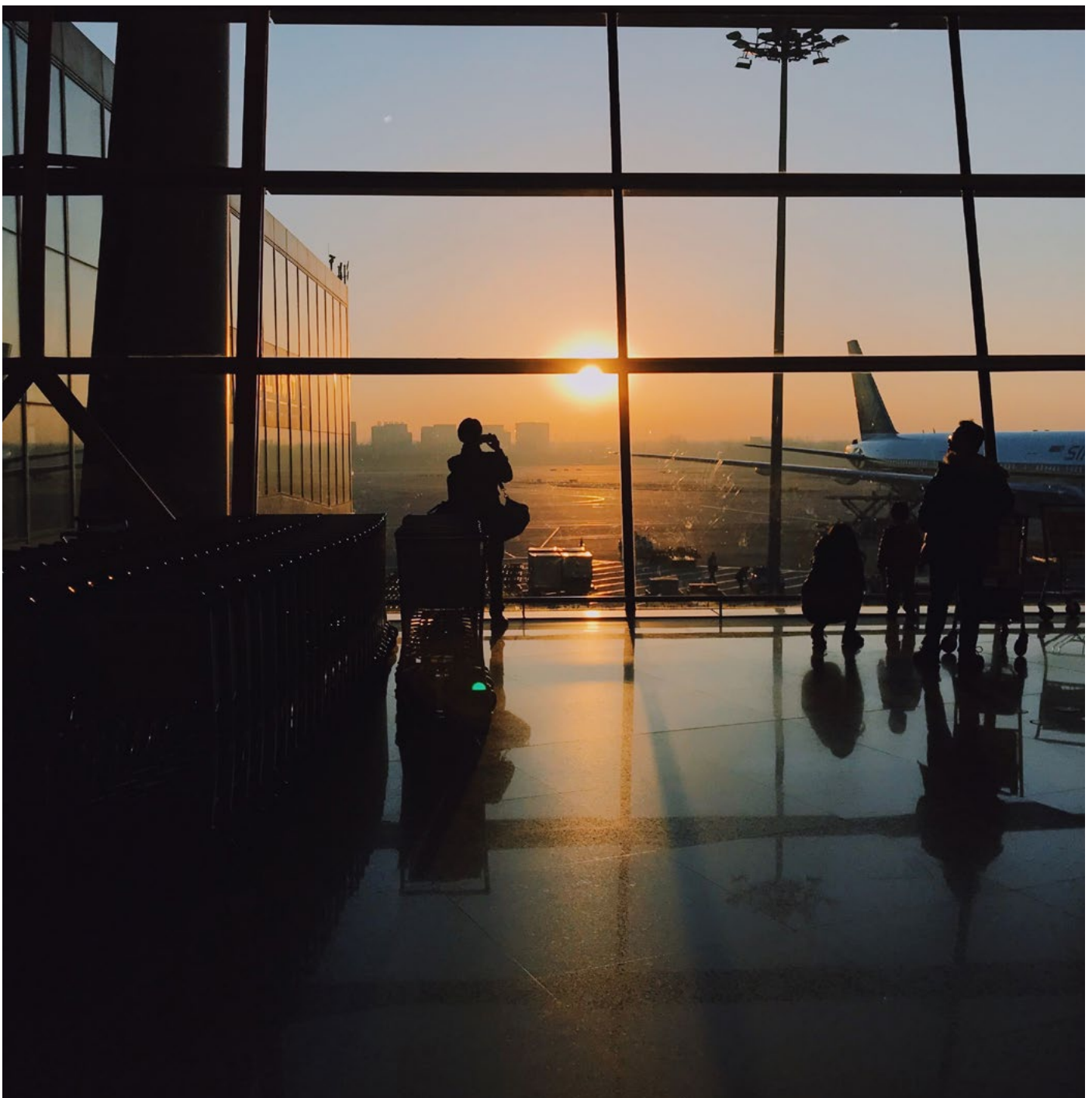
The study, which was published in the [World Allergy Organization's Journal](#), surveyed 3,200 people from 11 countries. Of those, 349 (more than 1 in 10!) reported having an allergic reaction during a flight.

Sources:

- Study Summary: <https://waojournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40413-017-0148-1>
- Related Article from Allergy Lifestyle.com: <https://www.allergylifestyle.com/food-allergies-and-flying/>
- Related Article from Kids with Food Allergies (KFA): <https://community.kidswithfoodallergies.org/blog/peanut-nut-allergy-risk-flying-airplanes-allergic-reaction>

4. Give yourself sufficient lead time for planning and execution:

- Allow enough lead time for trip planning — research, booking flights and hotels, and obtaining documentation and guidance from your Doctor (prescriptions for refills, prescriptions for back-up EAI's, a letter for airport Security and Gate Agents).
- Allow enough lead time to fill medication prescriptions. This may take longer than you anticipate if there is an EAI shortage.
- Once you've zeroed in on your hotel or resort, speak with the hotel restaurant manager and/or chef regarding your allergies. Also ask the hotel or resort manager or concierge for restaurant recommendations in the vicinity. If time permits you can pre-screen the restaurants online and by calling and speaking with the restaurant manager/owner/chef about your allergies – before you go.
- Allow enough lead time the day of travel to arrive at the airport well in advance of your flight. You will want to clear Security calmly, and have time to speak with the Gate Agent about your allergies.
- On the ground during your holiday, continue to research restaurants in advance with help from hotel/resort staff. For meals, try to avoid visiting restaurants at peak hours so restaurant management can attend to your needs.





TRIP PLANNING CHECKLIST

Travel Tips: World Travel with Food Allergies

PHASE 1: TRIP PLANNING

1. Getting Started:	Done
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Select method for organizing trip (pencil & paper to do lists, app, desktop tool)	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Researching Destinations:	Done
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify potential destinationsContact tourist boards to evaluate destinations for allergy sensitivity/awarenessSelect destination(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Researching Accommodations and Advance Restaurant Recommendations:	Done
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Complete online research comparing hotel/resort availability, amenities, pricingCall and speak to hotel/resort staff/management at top choicesBook accommodationsRequest hotel/resort recommendations on local dining optionsResearch hotel restaurant recommendations onlineCall and speak with managers/chefs/owners at recommended restaurants	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Booking Travel Arrangements:	Done
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Research airline options on line: departure airports, routes, availability, faresContact airline reservations to discuss food allergy policies and accommodations; ask them to document the conversation outcome in the reservation fileBook flight(s)Reserve a rental vehicle, if needed	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Consulting the Doctor:	Done
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Check expiration dates on all epinephrine auto-injectors (EAI's) and antihistamineCall Doctor and obtain prescriptions for refills and back-upsConsult with Doctor re: travel-related concernsObtain Doctor's letter stating 'fit to travel' and listing medications for SecurityFill EAI prescriptions and replace any expired antihistamine	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Other Advance Planning Items:	Done
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Communicate travel plans to family and friends who will not travel with you: flight details, hotel arrangementsOrder medical alert id bracelet/necklace and start wearing it (make it a habit)Print out List of Emergency Contacts (x2) & Emergency Action Plan (x2)Print out food allergy and cross contact explanations OR download translation appDownload tools to track your location and share with family staying behindReview mobile carrier plan for international call and data coverage and adjust coverage, as needed, to help with emergencies during tripNote emergency call number(s) for destination country(ies) & procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
7. And finally... Packing:	Done
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Pack baggage to be checkedPack carry-on luggage with medical kitPrepare folder with allergy documentationPack passportShop for easily transported foods & snacks you've eaten safely beforePack food for tripOther: Water the plants? Take the pup to the kennel?	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>



TRIP PLANNING CHECKLIST

Travel Tips: World Travel with Food Allergies

PHASE 2: DEPARTURE & TRAVEL DAY

1. Leaving Home — Departure Day:

Done

- Triple check carry-on items
- Do not forget passport, medical kit, and allergy documentation
- Other: Take out the trash? Lock up tight?

2. Waiting for Departure:

Done

- If using the restroom or shopping, be mindful of touching things. Wash hands.
- Speak to the Gate Agent
- Pre-board
- Brief Cabin Crew
- Sanitize assigned seating area
- Stow medications within easy reach and let the Cabin Crew know their location
- Explain all food allergies to any seatmates
- Use wipes to open restroom doors and storage bins. Wash hands or use wipes and hand sanitizers frequently, though washing is best.

PHASE 3: DESTINATION ARRIVAL

1. Check-in at the Hotel or Resort:

Done

- At check-in, speak directly with the hotel/resort manager & identify the food allergic traveler
- Double check that your room was cleaned with extra care and all in-room snacks have been removed
- Meet on-property restaurant manager/chef, as needed and available
- Request assistance translating any hard copy printout of your allergy explanation into the local language for restaurants and excursions
- Relax. Have Fun. Explore. Be Safe!

ONLINE SOURCES & RESOURCES

When Researching Destinations:

1. Local tourism resources/offices: <http://www.best-travel-deals-tips.com/tourism-offices.html>
2. Details for specific countries from FARE: (including: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Spain, United Kingdom, United States): <https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/managing-lifes-milestones/traveling/>
3. International Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Alliance: <https://www.foodallergy.org/education-awareness/advocacy-resources/international-food-allergy-anaphylaxis-alliance>
4. Local emergency numbers: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_emergency_telephone_numbers
5. Allergy Travels Website: <https://allergytravels.com/>

Researching Airlines:

1. *Allergic Living Airlines and Allergy Policies Directory*: <https://www.allergicliving.com/2018/05/15/allergic-livings-airlines-and-allergies-policies-directory/>
2. *Allergic Living Airline Comparison chart*: http://allergicliving.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Comparing-Airlines-Chart-2016_MAR15_V3.pdf
3. Policies of large US airlines re: serving of Nuts: <https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/nuts-airlines-policies>
4. Knowing your Consumer Rights from Kids with Food Allergies of the AAFA: <https://www.kidswithfoodallergies.org/page/flying-with-food-allergies-airline-regulations-and-steps-to-take-to-reduce-allergic-reactions.aspx>
5. Filing a complaint with the US Department of Transportation: <https://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/file-consumer-complaint>
6. US TSA regulations governing foods and beverages you can bring on the plane: <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/Security-screening/whatcanibring/food>
7. Department of Transportation Policy Regarding Americans with Disabilities: https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=ae47679a5dc0b0cdd685abc7e3437dbb&mc=true&node=pt14.4.382&rqn=div5#se14.4.382_193
8. May 2019 DOT decision regarding pre-boarding with food allergies: <https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/resources/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/338841/fare-white-order-final.pdf>
9. Book Recommendation: "*Flying With Food Allergies: What You Need To Know*" by Laurel Francoeur, Esq., Copyright 2013 Greenlaurel Solutions, LLC

Airline Accommodations to Request:

1. Research Findings: <https://waojournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40413-017-0148-1>
2. Allergy Lifestyle.com: <https://www.allergylifestyle.com/food-allergies-and-flying/>
3. Science Direct: Research Supporting Reaction Prevention on Airplanes: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2213219813000780>
4. Related Article from Kids with Food Allergies (KFA): <https://community.kidswithfoodallergies.org/blog/peanut-nut-allergy-risk-flying-airplanes-allergic-reaction>

Documentation Templates:

1. From the IFAAA for your Doctor: <https://www.foodallergy.org/sites/default/files/migrated-files/file/IFAAA-Travel-Plan.pdf>
2. From Select Wisely for your Doctor: http://www.selectwisely.com/products/Doctor_Letter_for_Auto-injectors?from=Airport_Security

Allergy Translation Tools:

1. Downloadable/Printable Resources:

- Allergy Translation (printed allergy cards): <https://allergytranslation.com/>
- Allergic Traveler (cards to order): <https://www.allergictraveler.net/>
- FARE (downloadable chef cards): <https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/managing-lifes-milestones/dining-out/food-allergy-chef-cards>
- Food Allergy Translate (allergy card): <http://www.foodallergytranslate.com/allergy-card>
- Select Wisely (printed allergy cards): <http://www.selectwisely.com/>

2. Tech Resources:

- Allergy Force (app): <http://www.allergyforce.com/>
- Allergic Traveler (app): <http://allergictravelerapp.com/>
- Allergy Smartz (app): <https://foodallergyloadown.com/allergysmartz/>
- Assure Tech Mobile App (app): <https://www.assuretech-mobile-app.com/>

Helpful Products:

1. Apps to help family and friends find you:

The Find My Friends app:

- Apple: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/find-my-friends/id466122094?mt=8>
- Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.fsp.android.friendlocator&hl=en_US

The Life360 GPS Locator & Tracker app:

- Apple: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/find-my-family-friends-phone/id384830320?mt=8>
- Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.life360.android.safetymapd&hl=en_US

2. Medical alert id's (bracelet or necklace):

- From Medical Id's: <https://www.medicalert.org/product/catalog/medical-ids/bracelets>
- From American Medical ID: <https://www.americanmedical-id.com/>
- Designed for kids From Allermates: <https://allermates.com/>

3. Containers for medication:

- From Allergy Superheroes: <https://shop.allergysuperheroes.com/products/single-dose-liquid-medicine-bottles>
- From Allermates: <https://allermates.com/collections/medicine-cases-bags>

4. Protective barriers for the flight:

- Disposable Seat Cover (white): <https://www.amazon.com/Disposable-Airplane-Seat-Covers-34319/dp/B01MU351DO>
- Reusable Seat Cover (black): <https://seatsitters.com/products/seat-sitters%E2%84%A2-original>
- 'My Travel Plus' Blanket & Pillow from Amazon: <https://amzn.to/2GemCJi>
- 'Lug Nap Sac Blanket & Pillow' from Amazon: <https://amzn.to/2URIfaQ>

Other Helpful Resources:

1. The No Nut Traveler:

- Blog: <http://nonuttraveler.com/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NoNutTraveler>
- Facebook: <https://bit.ly/2TJHI67>
- Require airlines to institute a Bill of Rights for food allergic children/adult passengers--Sign the petition: <http://nonuttraveler.com/sign-the-petition>

2. Allergy Travels.com Blog: <http://allergytravels.com/2017/02/16/flying-food-allergies-secrets-safely/>

3. Food Allergy Canada: <https://foodallergycanada.ca/allergy-safety/travelling/>

The End



—the food allergy management app

The Allergy Force app has everyday features you'll use all the time to make food choices when on-the-go. And emergency features (we hope you'll never use) that could save your life if you make a mistake. All on your phone. All within reach. When you need them most.

Learn more at www.allergyforce.com

