

EMPOWER YOUR FOOD ALLERGIC CHILD FOR THEIR FUTURE



—the food allergy app that puts peace of mind in your pocket

Is Your Child Ready To Self-Manage Their Food Allergies?



Readiness Check

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Empowering Your Child: Readiness to Self-Manage

Parenting is a process of loving by letting go, preparing your child — little by little — to leave home and begin their adult lives apart from you, sometimes far from you. Readyng your child to self-manage their food allergies adds a unique dimension to your parenting goals and process. Parents with children in their **later middle school into high school years** will find this readiness check helpful to review periodically. Think of it as your North Star — to keep you on track as you handoff food allergy responsibilities to your child. (If you are a parent of a young child with food allergies, bookmark this as a resource to revisit later.)

| 1. THEIR FOOD ALLERGY DIAGNOSIS | | | |
|---|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE THEIR FOOD ALLERGIES? <i>Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:</i> | Not Yet Initiated | Work In Progress | Yes! Mastered |
| What are their allergens? | | | |
| What the less common names are for their allergens? What kinds of foods are more likely to contain their allergens (e.g., protein bars, baked goods, frozen treats, chocolate, etc.)? | | | |
| What non-food items can contain their allergens (like pet food, personal care products, alcohol)? | | | |
| What cross contact is and how/where it can happen? | | | |
| Where their epinephrine auto-injector, antihistamine and any other emergency medications are at any given moment, on any given day? | | | |
| What anaphylaxis is and what the possible symptoms of anaphylaxis are? (even if they never experienced anaphylaxis before.) | | | |
| What their past allergic reactions have looked/felt like? | | | |
| What their Emergency Action Plan (aka, Emergency Care Plan, Food Allergy Action Plan) says to do for mild and for severe allergic reactions. | | | |
| What steps they should take if they think they are having an allergic reaction & in what order? | | | |
| 2. CARE & USE OF THEIR AUTO-INJECTOR | | | |
| HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE THEIR EPINEPHRINE? <i>Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:</i> | Not Yet Initiated | Work In Progress | Yes! Mastered |
| What kind of auto-injector devices they carry? | | | |
| How their devices work and how to use them? | | | |
| When and how to call 911 for help for an allergic reaction? | | | |
| Why and when to use their second auto-injector? | | | |
| How to protect their auto-injector from temperature extremes — both hot and cold? | | | |
| How to track their auto-injector expiration dates and when to renew them? | | | |
| How to refill their auto-injector prescription? | | | |

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“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.”

—Benjamin Franklin

| 3. SELF-ADVOCACY SKILLS & CONFIDENCE | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|---------------|
| HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-ADVOCATE? <i>Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know how to:</i> | Not Yet Initiated | Work In Progress | Yes! Mastered |
| List all their food allergies and explain what help they need from others to stay safe? | | | |
| Share their food allergy details confidently and accurately with adults, people in positions of authority (e.g., like restaurant wait staff, dining services staff, coaches, professors, school nurses, medical professionals)? | | | |
| Talk proactively and openly with peers about their food allergies and needs (e.g., like bunkmates, romantic interests, roommates, RA's, study partners, teammates)? | | | |
| Explain {teach} to people in their circle of trust the symptoms of anaphylaxis, how to use their auto-injectors, what allergic reactions can look like, and what needs to be done to treat a reaction? | | | |
| Explain the details of their Emergency Action Plan (its location, its contents) confidently and accurately to friends, coaches, supervisors, a random flight attendant? | | | |
| 4. FOOD LABEL READING & INTERPRETATION | | | |
| HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE FOOD LABEL READING? <i>Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:</i> | Not Yet Initiated | Work In Progress | Yes! Mastered |
| How and where to find their allergens on food labels? | | | |
| What the less common names for their allergens are? | | | |
| What Precautionary Allergen Labelling {PAL} is and where it is located on food labels? | | | |
| What 'May Contain' statements really mean & and how they should factor them into their ok-to-buy/do-not-buy decision making? | | | |
| How to interpret other PAL labelling related to manufacturing equipment and facilities and how they should factor it into their ok-to-buy/do-not-buy decision making? | | | |
| When and how to call a manufacturer for more allergen information and what questions to ask? | | | |

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"Love by doing a little less."

—Gabie Ruiz, M.Ed.

| 5. RESTAURANT NAVIGATION KNOW-HOW | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|---------------|
| HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE DINING OUT? <i>Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:</i> | Not Yet Initiated | Work In Progress | Yes! Mastered |
| What types of cuisine, in general, are particularly risky for their allergy profile (e.g., Chinese, Thai, Mexican, Indian, etc. cuisine)? | | | |
| What foods typically contain their allergens (e.g., like pesto, aioli, & BBQ sauces, or pizza, etc.)? | | | |
| How to find restaurant menus online and evaluate them for possible safe options and risks? | | | |
| How to call ahead? What to tell the restaurant? What to ask? | | | |
| When to veto a restaurant and how to suggest alternatives to friends, acquaintances? | | | |
| When and with whom to have their allergy conversation at the restaurant? | | | |
| What questions to ask about menu items and kitchen practices at the restaurant? | | | |
| How to send a meal politely & confidently back to the kitchen if they spot allergens in their order? | | | |
| What to do when they lose confidence in a restaurant after being seated and how to make a graceful exit if they choose to leave? | | | |
| 6. FOOD ALLERGY SOCIAL SAVVY | | | |
| HOW READY IS YOUR CHILD TO SELF-MANAGE SOCIALLY? <i>Can you answer yes to the following questions — do they know:</i> | Not Yet Initiated | Work In Progress | Yes! Mastered |
| How to build a circle of trust with people who will be there for them in emergencies? | | | |
| How to evaluate social event risks before going? Who to ask? What to ask? | | | |
| How to devise practical, comfortable-to-implement workarounds for event risks they uncover? | | | |
| Which alcoholic beverages are safe options for them (before they experiment, before they leave home)? | | | |
| What stay-safe strategies are for navigating parties? (e.g., like eating before going, setting a consumption limit, not sharing drinks, drinking directly from bottles/cans vs. glasses, being wary of mixed/spiked drinks, avoiding drinking games, having face saving exit strategies at the ready) | | | |
| When romance is in the air, how & when to disclose their food allergies, and how to talk about ways to keep them safe with their special friend. | | | |
| How and when to {gracefully} opt-out of social situations. | | | |

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