

Food Allergies Policy

Ringsfield Hall is committed to reducing the risk to guests and visitors with regard to the provision of food and the consumption of allergens in food which could lead to an allergic reaction.

This policy will be placed on our website and will be annually reviewed.

Statement

Ringsfield Hall is not in a position to guarantee a completely allergen free environment, Our aim is to minimise the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility, and plan for effective response to possible emergencies.

Contents

- **Objectives**
- **What Guests Should Do**
- **Background Information**
- **Common Food Allergies**
- **Responsibilities**
- **Staff Training**
- **Good Kitchen & Service Practices**

Appendix 1: Allergen Identification

Appendix 2: Emergency Response

Appendix 3: Staff Training Sign Off Sheet

Objectives of this Policy

- To promote awareness of the nature of food allergens and bring these to the attention of guests and visitors.
- To provide clear guidance to all catering staff on their responsibilities for the provision of food to guests and visitors with a confirmed food allergy.
- To ensure that appropriate education/training is available and implemented for any catering staff involved in providing food to customers with food allergies.
- To ensure appropriate information and support is available for staff.

Allergy Labelling Legislation

From 13 December 2014, new legislation (the EU Food Information for Consumers Regulation 1169/2011) requires food businesses to provide allergy information on food sold unpackaged. There are also changes to existing legislation on labelling allergenic ingredients in pre-packed foods. More information about the new European legislation can be found on the European Commission website.

The new legislation only covers information about major allergens intentionally used as ingredients. They do not cover allergens present following accidental contact.

Guests and visitors with food allergies dining at Ringsfield Hall

The risks of eating food prepared by others can be reduced significantly through good communication. It is the responsibility of the person with the food allergy to ensure that the correct steps are carried out to reduce as many of the risks as possible.

This process is documented and sent to all guests booked for a catered stay at Ringsfield Hall.

What should Guests do?

1. If you are coming to Ringsfield Hall for a catered stay please complete the Allergen Details Form sent to your group prior to your stay.
2. On arrival please advise the catering staff if you have a life-threatening food allergy. Your allergy will be written up on the Catering Board and all staff made aware. If you carry lifesaving medication like an EpiPen, you should carry this medication with you at all times when you are at Ringsfield Hall.
3. At food service, your food will be clearly labelled. If you are unsure please request further information from catering staff.

What should visitors attending events do?

1. All food will be clearly labelled with regard to allergens.
2. If you are allergic to a food that is not on the regulatory list, it will not be included on the allergen label
3. You should only eat the food on offer if you are content that the person you have informed about your food allergy has clearly understood everything you have

communicated. Food service staff are trained to seek assistance if they are unsure what is in the food.

Background

What is a food allergy?

Food allergies involve the body's immune system. The body reacts to certain allergens in food by producing antibodies, which can cause immediate and sometimes severe symptoms such as: itching or strange metallic taste in the mouth; swelling of the throat and tongue; difficulty in swallowing or speaking; abdominal cramps, nausea and vomiting; skin hives (nettle rash) anywhere on the body; and in most extreme cases difficulties in breathing and a severe fall in blood pressure (anaphylactic shock). In extreme cases this can prove fatal.

What is food intolerance?

This does not involve the immune system in the same way and is not usually as severe as a food allergy. Symptoms usually take longer and may include headaches, fatigue and digestive problems.

Food intolerance is harder to diagnose than a food allergy. The person with a known allergen trigger may know what food ingredient will provoke a reaction. However, they may well have eaten this food or a specific dish previously and had no adverse reaction.

Who is at risk?

Anybody can develop a food allergen or intolerance at any time in their life irrespective of whether they have consumed the food previously. A person with an allergy is at risk even if they consume a small amount of the food allergen.

The proportion of the UK population with a true food allergy is approximately 1-2% of adults and 5-8% of children which equates to around 1.5 million in the UK. In addition, about 1:100 of the UK population has coeliac disease and needs to avoid gluten.

Common Food Allergens

Listed below:

- Cereals containing gluten, (i.e. wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt, kamut or their hybridized strains) and products thereof
- Crustaceans and products thereof
- Eggs and products thereof
- Fish and products thereof
- Peanuts and products thereof
- Soybeans and products thereof

- Milk and products thereof (including lactose)
- Nuts i.e. almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashews, pecan nuts, Brazil nuts, pistachio nuts, macadamia nuts and Queensland nuts and products thereof
- Celery and products thereof
- Mustard and products thereof
- Sesame seeds and products thereof
- Sulphur dioxide and sulphites at concentrations of more than 10 mg/kg or 10 mg/litre expressed as SO₂.
- Lupin and products thereof
- Molluscs and products thereof

Allergen identification and examples are given in Appendix 1.

People may report allergies to other foods not on the above list. Most common in the UK are kiwi, peas, other legumes (beans etc), other seeds and other fruits and vegetables. In some cases, people only need to avoid these when raw and can have them cooked.

Responsibilities

Whoever is cooking and/or preparing or assisting is responsible for ensuring that any food provided for guests or visitors with a food allergy is appropriate for their needs.

The Hospitality Co-ordinator will ensure that the kitchen has stock or can access the necessary stock ingredients to offer suitable alternatives for people with allergies, intolerances and coeliac disease. This includes wheat/gluten free bread and pasta, and alternatives to cow's milk and butter/margarine spreads (e.g. milk free spread). Soya milk is available on request.

Seeking dietary requirements of a group being catered for prior to their visit is the responsibility of the Administrator and/or the Centre Director.

The Cook will ensure that allergen information is provided on all food/listed in the list of 'Common Food Allergens' listed above. This information will be supplied in Allergy Data Sheets that can be easily viewed by guests and visitors.

Staff Training

All staff cooking, preparing and serving food must hold a Level 2 Food Hygiene & Safety Certificate accepted at local authority level. Lead Cooks must also attend a recognised training course on Food Allergy Awareness.

Sessional staff will be trained internally to follow 'Safer Food, Better Business' principles and be overseen at all times by the Lead Cook.

All training records will be maintained in the 'Safer Food, Better Business' file. The records will also show annual refresher training.

Volunteers must be trained on food allergy awareness and local procedures by the Hospitality Co-ordinator or Lead Cook before commencing work.

All catering staff will be trained in the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and emergency response procedures (see Appendix 3) and will be able to assist in the event of any incident. However, duty of care or responsibility for emergency responses will rest with the visiting group.

Good Kitchen and Service Practices

Kitchen

All dishes which are produced in-house will be from standard ingredients from 'approved' suppliers.

Where allergenic ingredients are packaged openly/loosely, they are stored separately to reduce the risk of contamination.

Equipment/utensils used in the preparation of food for people with a food allergy are cleaned according to standard procedures, which under normal circumstances should be sufficient.

A specific area of the kitchen will be sought for the preparation of any food for someone with a food allergy. The area will be sanitised before it is used to prepare food.

When cooking food for people with a food allergy or intolerance the cook will wash their hands before and in-between preparation tasks.

All food produced for people with food allergy or intolerance will be placed away from other food and covered in cling film. It will then be clearly marked with the person's diet.

Where dishes contain common allergens, they are clearly labelled at time of service.

Food Service

A check must be made that the special meal ordered for the person with a food allergy or intolerance has been supplied and is appropriate for the person. Any concern should be immediately discussed with appropriate kitchen staff.

Normal food handling procedures should apply (e.g. washing hands, wearing disposable gloves and aprons).

Staff are aware to keep serving utensils separate to avoid cross contamination.

All tables are cleaned with an appropriate solution.

Good communication

Staff are trained to escalate any concerns a guest or visitor may have regarding a food allergy or intolerance to a line manager if they are unsure. Appendix 2 sets out the steps people with food allergies should take when they are dining at Ringsfield Hall.

Appendix 1

Allergen Identification

The examples given are not exhaustive.

Cereals containing gluten e.g. Wheat, Rye, Barley, Oats, Spelt and Kamut

Bread, wheat flour, biscuits, crackers, pasta, breakfast cereals (including items like breadcrumbs and batter), cakes, pastry, semolina, soya sauce It is also found in many processed foods such as soups, gravies, sauces, sausages, haggis, fish cakes and all processed foods must be checked to ensure they are gluten free.

Celery and Celeriac e.g. Stalks, Seeds and Leaves

Salads, soups and celery salt, stock cubes, stew pack, some meat products

Eggs. e.g. Hens, Duck, Turkey Quail, Goose, Gull and Guinea Fowl

Cakes, sauces, pasta, mayonnaise, glazed produces, some meat products (e.g. meatloaf, used as a binder), quiche, mousse, foods brushed with egg, Quorn

Fish, Crustaceans and Molluscs e.g. all Fish, Prawns, Lobster, Crab, Clams, Oysters, Mussels and Langoustine

Soy and Worcestershire sauce. Thai fish sauce, relish, some salad dressing, fish extracts, oils and paste

Milk. e.g. Cows, Sheep and Goat

Milk powder, yoghurt, butter, margarine, cheese, cream, ghee, milk glazed products, ice cream, custard and other milk puddings Milk powder and milk products are used in many manufactured products. Some processed meats, chocolate, some canned fish, Quorn.

Mustard

Mustard paste, seeds, leaves, flour, salad dressings, marinades, soups, sauces (e.g. cheese sauce), curries, some meat products, occasionally cheese scones.

Peanuts

Arachis or groundnut oil, peanut flour, satay sauce, refined peanut oil. Cakes, biscuits, ice cream desserts, breakfast cereal, salad dressing, confectionary and vegetarian products.

Other nuts e.g. Walnuts, Cashew, Pecan, Brazil, Pistachio, Macadamia, Queensland, Almonds, Hazelnut, Pinenut, Chestnut

Cakes, biscuits, sauces, desserts, bread, crackers, ice cream desserts, praline (hazelnut), some choc spreads, nut butters, essences and oils, marzipan and frangipane (almond), pesto, nut salad dressings, breakfasts, confectionary, vegetarian products.

Sesame seeds

Oil or paste, tahini, houmous, furikake, gomashio, bread

Soya e.g. Flour, Tofu, Beancurd, Textured Soya Tofu, textured vegetable protein, soy sauce, soy 6 Protein, Soy Sauce and Edameme Beans

Bean flour used in cakes, biscuits, pasta, burgers, sausages, confectionary. Dairy products made from soya beans including soya milk and some ice creams

Sulphur Dioxide and Sulphites

Some meat products, stock cubes, bouillon mix, fruit juice drinks, dried fruit/vegetables, wine, beer, cider

Lupin Seeds and flour

Some types of break and pastries, e.g. waffles particularly those manufactured in France and Belgium)

Appendix 2

Emergency Response

IMMEDIATE ACTION IS VITAL

- If an allergic person becomes ill, it is likely that person – or someone with them – will state that they are suffering an allergic reaction. They may use the word “ANAPHYLAXIS”

- Immediately send someone to dial 999 giving the following information:

“This is an emergency. A guest has collapsed and we believe they are suffering from anaphylaxis”. (Pronounced Ana-fill-axis).

- Request the assistance of a First Aider until the ambulance crew arrive.

- Keep calm and make the patient feel comfortable. All staff trained in First Aid will know what to do if someone suffers from anaphylaxis.

Note: Severe reactions can take place within a few minutes and in very extreme cases where prompt treatment is not sought – can be fatal.

Appendix 3

**Food Allergies Policy
Staff Training Sign Off Sheet**

I have received, read and understood the attached Food Allergies Policy.

I have a copy for my own information for referral.

Signed

Supervisor/Manager's signature.....

Date