10 FAACTS *about* Food Allergies

1. Food allergies affect approximately **15 million** Americans. Studies report that **1 in 13** children in the United States have a food allergy. This averages to **two** children per classroom.

2. A food allergy is an **immune system response** to a food that the body mistakenly believes is harmful.

3. Eight foods account for 90% of all food allergy reactions: **Peanuts, Tree nuts, Milk, Egg, Wheat, Soy, Fish, & Shellfish**. However, almost any food can cause a reaction.

4. There is **no cure** for food allergies and **strict avoidance** is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction.

5. **Trace amounts** of an allergen can trigger an allergic reaction in some individuals. Past reactions to a food allergy **do not predict future reactions**! Someone can still have a life-threatening reaction to a food they are allergic to, even if they have never had a serious reaction before.

6. Symptoms can **develop rapidly** after exposure to an allergen, often within minutes and usually within 30 minutes. However, it can take up to 2 hours for symptoms to occur after exposure to a food allergen.

7. Anaphylaxis is a **serious allergic reaction** that comes on quickly and has the potential to become life-threatening. Anaphylaxis requires immediate medical treatment, including an injection of epinephrine and a visit to the emergency room.

8. It is important to be deliberate and not hesitate when you have to use epinephrine. The device is **potentially life-saving**. A call to 9-1-1 and a trip to the emergency room should always follow epinephrine administration.

9. Individuals at risk should carry **two epinephrine auto-injectable devices** with them at all times AND an **Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Action Plan** signed by a board-certified allergist.

10. **Food allergies continue to rise** – especially among children – and are a safety and public health concern across the United States. You can get free resources and find out how to help keep those with food allergies safe at:

www.FoodAllergyAwareness.org

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