

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for May 15, 2023
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about food allergies, and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

I am a foodie sort of person. I love trying new foods and even strange foods. It is easy for me to take for granted how easy this is for me. For many people living with food allergies, their choices are limited, and so is their ability to be adventurous.

According to the CDC, an estimated 8% of US children have a food allergy. That is roughly 1 in 13 children or about 2 students per classroom. Food allergy is also estimated to affect 5% of adults. Children can be allergic to certain foods and then outgrow this as they get older, but that does not happen all the time. In fact, sometimes the food allergy develops in adulthood.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease explains that some people react to a component of a food with a response from their immune system. Sometimes this produces a life-threatening response.

An IgE-mediated allergy means that IgE allergy antibodies are a cause of the allergic reaction to a food. The signs and symptoms of IgE mediated food allergy usually occur within minutes of ingestion and include hives, redness of the skin, vomiting and in more severe reactions, anaphylaxis.

In our food safety classes for food service employees we used to teach about the Big 8 allergens – milk, eggs, wheat, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, and shellfish. But as of January 1 of this year, there are now 9 recognized food allergens that require special labeling. The newly recognized allergen is sesame. These 9 are responsible for causing 90% of the allergic reactions in the United States. There are certainly more than 9 foods that cause allergic reactions, but these are considered the most critical to label.

Since there is no cure for allergies, strict avoidance is the current recommended practice. Suspected food allergies should always be evaluated, diagnosed, and treated by a qualified medical professional. In our age of medical information at our fingertips, it can be tempting to diagnose a food allergy on your own. Self-diagnosis can lead to unnecessary dietary restrictions

and inadequate nutrition, especially in children. Therefore, talk with your primary care physician about allergy testing.

It is recommended to have a “Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan”. This plan outlines recommended treatment in case of an allergic reaction, is signed by a physician, and includes emergency contact information. All immediate family members should know what to do in case of an emergency. This is also a useful document to provide to schools or church or sports activities.

And now let’s look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. OSU Extension is offering the ServSafe® Manager Food Safety Training course in June. Look for registration details on our website, Coshocton.osu.edu.

Again this year, OSU Extension and Coshocton Regional Medical Center will be offering Dining with Diabetes, a cooking school and nutrition education program designed for people with diabetes and their family members or caregivers. In a series of four classes, cooking demonstrations will help participants learn healthy techniques to use in their own kitchens.

Dining with Diabetes will be held on Monday evenings July 10, 17, 24, and 31 from 5:30-7:30 pm. The cost of the program is \$20 per person and includes all four classes, educational handouts, and small sized meals that feature a variety of recipes. You are encouraged to also register a support person to attend with you for an additional \$10.

Those with diabetes or pre-diabetes and their family members or caretakers are encouraged to attend. Paid registration is required by July 5. Registration is limited to 20 participants. To register visit coshocton.osu.edu.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!