

Food Allergies? 5 Ways to Cope on the Road

If you are one of the 15 million Americans with a food allergy, don't let it ruin your travel plans.*

"People with severe allergic reactions to certain foods can feel anxious about leaving the safety of their own kitchen. By discussing your concerns with an allergist and being strategic, you can protect yourself while enjoying your travel experience," says Dr. Gary Kleiner, an allergist with the University of Miami Health System.

Dining without dread

Plan to Succeed.

- Research your destination's restaurant options and menus online or download the mobile app, AllergyEats, a U.S. food allergy restaurant guide.
- Try to book accommodations with a microwave and mini-fridge, so you have a back-up meal plan.
- Locate local allergists, if possible.
- Identify the hospital emergency department closest to your accommodation.

Pack smart.

Depending on your food allergies, your "don't leave home without it" list should include:

- Medication - in original bottle - enough to last your entire trip plus a few days. If traveling in the U.S., bring a prescription refill order. If overseas,

bring extra medication.

- Non-expired Epi-pen, plus extras.
- Non-perishable allergen-free snacks. What's safe in America may contain different ingredients if made overseas.
- Disinfectant wipes or hand sanitizer.

Communicate upfront.

Tell your travel companions, airline, host, tour guide, or anyone serving you or arranging your meals about your food allergies. Give them sufficient time to work around your food restrictions. Let your travel partners know what to do in case of an emergency and tell your allergist when and where you're traveling. Find out if your doctor can email, fax, or call in a prescription and communicate with doctors in other locations.

Have a plan.

Always carry a Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan with you; tuck extras in your luggage. Present your "chef card" (available in 11 languages) to restaurant chefs, cooks, or managers when eating out. This free wallet-size card outlines foods you must avoid.

Get a visual.

Scan your restaurant table and hotel room for food residue that might trigger an allergic reaction.

**Food Allergy Research & Education*

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