

Peanut Allergies In Schools

Dear parents, as you might be aware, many schools in Europe and the US have a 'nut free' policy. Since we presently have 4 children with nut allergies at the BISI, we have decided to attempt in making our school a nut free place.

Because peanut and tree nut allergies can be life threatening, many schools have responded by designating peanut or nut-free lunch tables or classrooms, or even by declaring the entire campus peanut or nut-free. We realize that this might not be that easy in a country such as Turkey, but considering a child with a nut allergy could die when coming in contact with nuts or even just traces of nuts, we really have no choice.

So what is a nut?

Macadamia nuts, Brazil nuts, Cashews, Almonds, Walnuts, Pecans, Pistachios, Chestnut, Beechnuts, Hazelnuts, Pine nuts, Ginkgo nuts, Hockory nuts and of course Pea nuts. Many people with nut allergies are also allergic to Sesame Seeds.

What is a Peanut allergy?

A peanut allergy occurs when the immune system overreacts to peanut exposure. Peanuts are one of the most common food allergens, especially in children. If a child has a severe allergy, even the smallest trace or dust of a peanut can cause a reaction called anaphylaxis (an-a-fi-lak-sis). This can lead to death if the child is not treated immediately. Although some children may outgrow their peanut allergy, it usually lasts a lifetime.

Can the allergic child just avoid peanuts?

People with peanut allergies have to be very careful about what they eat. It only takes a tiny trace of peanut residue to cause some people to react. Sometimes the peanut ingredient transfers to another food that does not normally have that ingredient in it. For example, a knife with peanut butter residue on it could be used for another spread or foods. Nuts can get mixed in with other food in bulk food bins. It is very important that everyone that comes in contact with an allergic child is aware of his/her allergy so that they can help the child avoid exposure to the allergen.

None of the above mentioned nuts should be brought into school, in lunchboxes, cookies/cakes for birthday parties, at school events such as International Food Day or for any cakes/cookies that are for sale during Fun Day or any prizes sent in for such events.

Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

BISI Parent Teacher Association