

In early childhood services that cater for multiple food allergies, having one low allergy menu is often the most practical choice.

A low allergy menu which caters for children with different allergies may not include cow's milk, soy, eggs, wheat and nuts. As a result, many commercial food products will not be suitable.

The low allergy menu will need to be based on foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables, lean meat and alternatives, calcium fortified rice milk and rice and corn products. It is not appropriate to combine a low allergy menu with a vegetarian menu, as this limits the types and variety of foods provided for both vegetarian children as well as children with food allergies.

Restricting certain foods or food groups unnecessarily can impact on children's growth and development. For example, children with allergies benefit from the protein and other nutrients found in lean meats and alternatives. Similarly, vegetarian children benefit from the nutrients provided in milk, eggs and wheat in particular.

The following table summarises types of foods that may be suitable to include in a low allergy menu, as well as foods that are most likely to contain common allergens (which should be avoided in a low allergy menu).

Low allergy menu items

Category	Suitable items free from milk, soy, egg, wheat and nuts	Items that contain or are likely to contain milk, soy, egg, wheat or nuts
Fruit and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fresh, dried and canned fruits and vegetables ● Fruit and vegetable juices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commercial potato salad, mashed potato, instant potato ● Salads containing eggs e.g. Caesar ● Salads containing nuts e.g. Waldorf (walnuts) ● Salad dressing ingredients (check label)
Grain (cereal) products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Corn or rice-based breakfast cereals (e.g. Freedom Foods corn flakes and rice puffs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wheat based breakfast cereals e.g. Weeties™, Weet-Bix™ ● Flavoured porridge sachets
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plain baby rice cereal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular baby rusks ● Commercial mixed baby cereals and muesli
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pure rye bread (if tolerated) ● Rice based breads 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All regular breads and rolls, crumpets ● Bakery items such as pastries and doughnuts ● Many gluten free breads contain soy flour
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Corn and rice based pasta and noodles ● Rice ● Oats (if tolerated) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pasta, spaghetti, noodles, couscous ● Canned spaghetti, macaroni and cheese
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rice flour, corn flour, potato flour, arrowroot, chickpea flour, buckwheat flour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wheat flour
Milk, yoghurt,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specialised infant formula ● Calcium fortified rice drink 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cow's milk, reduced fat milk, skim milk, sheep and goat's milk and regular and partially

Low allergy menu items

cheese and alternatives, and dairy desserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coconut milk yoghurt 	<p>hydrolysed infant formula</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lactose free milk (contains cow's milk protein) ● Condensed milk, evaporated milk, buttermilk ● Soy milk and infant formula ● Yoghurt, Fruche, custard, yoghurt drinks, fermented milk drinks ● Creamed rice ● Soy yoghurt, soy custard, soy ice cream ● All cheeses including cheddar, ricotta, cream and cottage ● Vegetarian or soy cheeses (often contain cow's milk protein)
Meat, poultry, fish, eggs, legumes and nuts and alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All fresh and frozen meat, chicken and fish ● Canned fish in brine, oil or spring water ● Canned or dried beans and legumes ● Tofu ● Plain baked beans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crumbed and battered products ● Patties, burgers (check label) ● Processed meats and sandwich meats (check label) ● Textured or hydrolysed vegetable protein ● All eggs (poached, boiled, fried, scrambled, omelette) ● Quiche, egg and bacon pie, spinach pie, frittata, veggie slice ● Flavoured baked beans ● Fresh nuts, nut pastes and peanut butter
Cakes and Biscuits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Homemade muffins, cakes, biscuits and pancakes using milk free margarine, wheat / soy free flour, rice milk and egg replacer ● Plain corn or rice based crackers and biscuits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Most commercial muffins, cakes, biscuits and pancakes ● Bakery items such as pastries and doughnuts ● Most dry biscuits and crackers ● Flavoured rice and corn crackers (check label)
Salad dressings and sauces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vinegar based salad dressings such as French, Italian and balsamic ● Homemade gravy made with wheat free flour ● Tomato sauce ● Soy sauce (e.g. Fountain's gluten free soy sauce) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Peanut and satay sauce ● Creamy salad dressings e.g. coleslaw, Caesar and mayonnaise (check label) ● Béarnaise, tartare, Hollandaise sauce ● Béchamel, white or cheese sauce ● Worcestershire sauce ● Pesto
Soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Homemade soup without milk, soy, egg, wheat and nut products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Creamed soups ● Chicken and sweet corn and other Asian soups (may have egg) ● Soups with pasta or noodles
Jams and spreads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Honey, jams, marmalade, golden syrup, Mighty Mite spread (avoid crumb contamination in jars and dairy free spreads) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nutella (hazelnut) ● Cheese spread ● Peanut butter and other nut pastes ● Lemon butter ● Vegemite
Fats and oils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sunflower, safflower, olive oil, canola oil ● Milk free margarines such as Nuttalex, Becel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nut based oils e.g. peanut, walnut ● Ghee, butterfat ● Margarine and butter
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tomato salsa dip ● Stock cubes ● Herbs and spices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commercial dips (check label) ● Yoghurt sauce on souvlaki, raita dip with Indian meals ● Check Asian meals for crushed nuts or shredded egg

Shopping for allergy friendly products

Many allergy friendly products can be found in supermarket health food aisles. These products may also be available directly from the supplier. Allergy friendly products change regularly, but this list is a handy starting point.

Allergy friendly shopping list

Item	Allergy free item or brand
Egg replacer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Orgran no egg
Cow's milk alternative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Calcium fortified soy or rice drinks
Yoghurt alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Soy Life soy yoghurt● Coyo or So Delicious coconut yoghurt (milk and soy free) <p>Check the Coyo website for your closest supplier.</p>
Milk free spreads	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Nuttelex, Becel, Sundew
Gluten / wheat free flours and baking products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● White Wings gluten free plain and self raising flour● Orgran All Purpose plain and self raising flour● White Wings corn flour● Wards rice flour● Wards baking powder (wheat free)
Check that these do not contain soy	
Gluten free soy sauce	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Fountain soy sauce● Tamari
Gluten free stock powder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Vegeta or Massel stock powder
Gluten free pasta	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Orgran pasta, spaghetti, lasagne sheets, cannelloni shells● San Remo gluten free pasta, spaghetti, lasagne sheets
Gluten free breadcrumbs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Rice crumbs● Crumbs from gluten free bread

Adapted with permission from *Cow's milk, soy, egg, wheat and nut free diet*, Department of Allergy and Immunology, Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, November 2007.

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