

## NUT USAGE GUIDELINES

There are an increasing number of people, particularly children, who suffer from food allergies. Due to this, Caterlink have deemed it necessary to introduce a Nut Policy and Nut Usage Guidelines into all educational establishments. All catering staff must receive training in these, which must be recorded on their training record cards.

**It is the responsibility of the Unit Manager to ensure that all areas under their control comply with these guidelines.**

- **Caterlink are unable to guarantee that dishes/products served are totally free from nuts/nut derivatives.** (for example, curry paste is made in a factory containing nuts, bread is baked in a factory handling nuts, some production lines have machines lubricated with nut oil).
- If a pupil/resident/customer/client or parent ask whether we operate a nut free policy, the answer should be that Caterlink do not use nuts in education and healthcare establishments, but we are unable to guarantee products and dishes are totally nut free.
- The Caterlink Nut Policy must be prominently displayed in all establishments.
- Check labelling on all items especially processed goods, packet mixes and frozen foods to ensure that nuts are not present in the ingredients. Beware of items such as choc ices, as nut oils are often used to grease moulds.
- All suppliers will provide accurate written details about all ingredients. 3663 provide a helpline which should be contacted with any queries.
- Ensure that all service staff on duty know the ingredients in all dishes.
- Organise a staff training session on allergies and make sure all new staff are aware of how serious food allergies are.
- Remember that any oil that has previously been used to cook products containing nuts may contain minute traces of potentially lethal nut proteins.
- Hands, utensils, cutlery and work surfaces should be washed scrupulously after handling foods containing potent allergens. Contact with an item previously in contact with nuts may trigger an allergic reaction.
- An effective system must be in place in all establishments to ensure that the catering department is notified of any special dietary requirements.
- If a customer claims to have a food allergy, take the matter seriously.
- By adhering to the fresh food policy, staff involved in cooking should be aware of all ingredients in main course and pudding dishes. Service staff should be briefed of ingredients prior to service.
- If there is any doubt about whether a food is free of a certain ingredients, admit to the customer that you are unsure.

### Emergency Action

- Ensure that all catering staff are aware of the nominated first aider and how to contact them.
- In most schools someone holds an antidote to administer to known nut allergy (and bee sting) sufferers. Make staff aware of who this person is and contact immediately if an incident occurs.
- If a customer suddenly becomes seriously ill and collapses, in the first instance contact the nominated first aider. If, however, they cannot be contacted **immediately** call 999 and give the following information:  
**“This is an emergency. A customer has collapsed and we believe they are suffering from anaphylaxis.”**  
(Pronounced Anna-fill-axis)  
Someone should wait at the entrance to the establishment to direct the ambulance crew to the patient.
- **Do not administer medication under any circumstances.**
- Remember, death from an allergic reaction to food can take place in less than 10 minutes. **Immediate** action is vital.



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