

Empowered Adults in the Dating World

Dating with Food Allergies

TEAL Tactics on how to date with food allergies:

1. Educate your date about your food allergies within the first few conversations.
2. When planning a date, remind your date of your food allergies.
3. Choose restaurants that you are familiar and comfortable with dining.
 - a. Know the restaurant's food allergy protocol, but always reiterate your food allergies to restaurant staff when placing your order and provide your allergy chef card.
4. When on a date, do not share food or drinks unless the safety of both meals and drinks are ensured.
5. Ensure the date environment (i.e. movie theater, bowling alley, baseball game) is safe.
6. Always be prepared to clean surfaces and hands with proper wipes to ensure allergen is not present.
7. Dates include handholding and kissing. Remind your date not to consume your allergen(s) prior to your date. If he/she does, waiting one hour allows 99% of allergen to be eliminated ([see attached reference](#)). You may also consider rinsing of mouth and/or brushing teeth.
8. Sending gentle reminders to your date about your allergens is important to ensure your safety.
9. Discuss your [Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan](#) with your date before the date occurs.
 - a. Make sure he/she knows where to locate your epinephrine auto-injectors.
 - b. Make sure he/she knows what the [signs and symptoms](#) are for anaphylaxis.
10. Before a date, [share a video on how to use an epinephrine auto-injector](#) in case you have an allergic reaction - this is important to share when first starting to date someone.
11. If your date orders food that contains your allergen while with you, consider this person may not be the right person for you!

Food allergies affect as many as **32 million Americans**, including **26 million adults**.

Be "Empowered" with these **TEAL Tactics** on how to start and maintain the discussion of **food allergies** in the dating world!

TEAL Tactics to manage your food allergies in a relationship:

1. Continuous communication and education are key to ensure your safety!
2. Ensure your partner continues to take your food allergies seriously.
3. Ensure communication of your food allergy when attending family gatherings and find out what's on the menu.
 - a. Review all labels for foods prepared, if there is no label, do not consume it.
4. Your partner is your best advocate, other than yourself!
5. Bring a food option when attending family gatherings.
6. Frequent cleaning of common spaces/items is necessary to avoid a contact allergic reaction (i.e. couch crumbs, remote control).
7. Continue educating on the use of epinephrine auto-injectors, and practice with a trainer regularly.
8. Grocery shopping, cooking, reading labels, etc. together and regularly will help your partner understand how to manage food allergies.
9. For safety, your partner should avoid your allergen, if they choose to consume your allergen, ensure that it is done safely.
 - a. A tactic for this is to make sure that they consume your allergen in a space other than your shared space or if it is in your shared space, to ensure that the space is properly cleaned afterwards to avoid cross-contact.
10. If traveling apart and your allergen is consumed, make sure that your partner's toothbrush is changed before returning home (i.e. nut oils remain on toothbrush).
11. Ensure your partner knows your dining food allergy protocol when ordering food.
12. When kissing in a relationship, wait the appropriate time before kissing if your allergen is consumed. Remind your date not to consume your allergen(s) prior to your date. If he/she does, waiting one hour allows 99% of allergen to be eliminated ([see attached reference](#)). You may also consider rinsing of mouth and/or brushing teeth.
13. Having a food allergy in a relationship can be fun - you can explore new recipes and new restaurants with your partner!

Find out more on managing food allergies as an adult:

<https://www.FoodAllergyAwareness.org/education/adults-with-food-allergies/>