

Tree nuts

Common tree nuts include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, chestnuts, hazelnuts (filberts), hickory nuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts (pinon, pignolias), pistachios, shea nuts and walnuts.

People who are allergic to tree nuts should also avoid peanuts and tree nut derivatives because of the risk of cross-contamination. People with an allergy to one type of tree nut have a greater chance of being allergic to other types.

Coconut and nutmeg are not included in the list of tree nuts; however, they can cause allergic reactions, just like any other food. If you have a tree nut allergy, ask your allergist if coconut and nutmeg are safe for you.

Other names for tree nuts:

- Anacardium nuts, Nut meats, Queensland nut (macadamia)

Possible sources of tree nuts:

- Baked goods, e.g., cakes, cereal bars, cookies, crackers, donuts, energy bars, granola bars, pastries and pies, baking mixes, Cereals, muesli, Ice cream, flavoured ice water treats, frozen desserts, sundae toppings, frozen yogurts, pralines, Marzipan (almond paste), Smoke flavourings e.g., barbecue sauces, Nut-flavoured coffees and liqueurs such as Frangelico and amaretto, Salads, (e.g., Waldorf Salad) and salad dressings, Barbecue and pesto sauces, Spreads and Nut butters (e.g., Nutella), Gianduja and giandula (chocolate blended with hazel nuts)

Non-food sources of tree nuts:

Bean-bags, kick sacks, Bird seed, Cosmetics, skin and hair care products, lotions, soap, body scrubs, sun screens, Massage oils, Pet food, Sandblasting materials

Cross-Reactivity Between Tree Nuts and Peanuts:

Peanuts are legumes, and are biologically unrelated to tree nuts. However, there is a high level of allergic cross-reactivity between peanuts and tree nuts, meaning that people with tree nut allergies are at increased risk of developing peanut allergies. If you are diagnosed with a tree nut allergy, your allergist will advise you whether to avoid peanuts as well.

Tree Nut Allergy Symptoms:

The most significant symptom of tree nut allergies is anaphylaxis, a systemic reaction that can cause shock, severe breathing difficulties, and cardiac arrhythmia, among other symptoms. Because tree nut allergies are especially likely to cause anaphylaxis, people with tree nut allergies will be prescribed injectible epinephrine (an Epi-Pen or similar medicine) and should always carry it with them. Other common symptoms of tree nut allergies are skin symptoms (like hives and welts) and asthma.

Coconut and Tree Nut Allergies:

Whether coconut should be considered a tree nut is a matter of some controversy. The FDA mandates that coconut be considered a tree nut for labeling purposes; however, as the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network notes, coconut allergies are exceedingly rare, with fewer than 10 reported cases. A June 2007 study in the *Annals of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology* indicated cross-reactivity between coconuts, walnuts, and hazelnuts in one patient. Your allergist can advise you on the suitability of coconut for your diet.

