

Feeding Minds, Not Fears: How to Keep Students With Food Allergy Safe and Included on Campus

Tiffany Leon, MS, RD

Assistant Director, Training and Professional Programs



Speaker + Disclosure



Tiffany Leon, MS, RD
Assistant Director, Training and Professional Programs
FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education)

No disclosures to report.

Learning Objectives

- Review food allergy as a disability and the legal obligations of college and universities to meet the students' needs
- Highlight best practices in higher education based on the updated "Guidelines to Manage Food Allergies in Higher Education"
- Discover gaps in food allergy accommodations and brainstorm solutions to keep students safe and included on campus

Food allergy as a disability

What is food allergy?



Food allergy is when your body's immune system overacts to a food. Your body's response to the food is an **allergic reaction**.



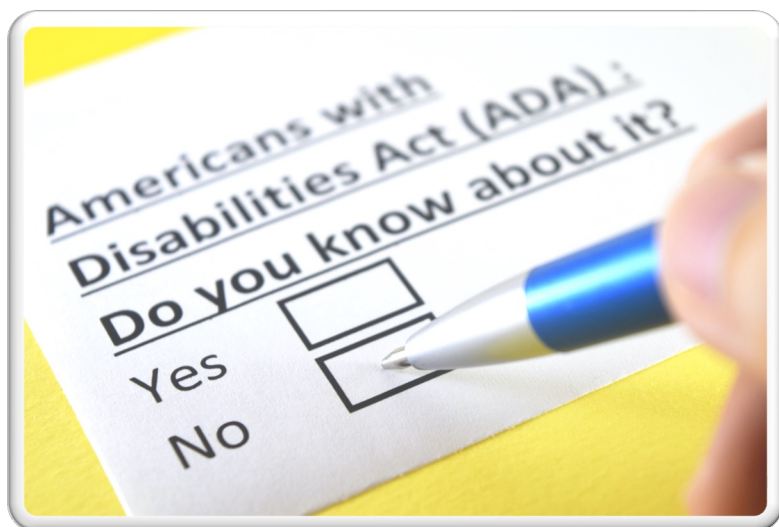
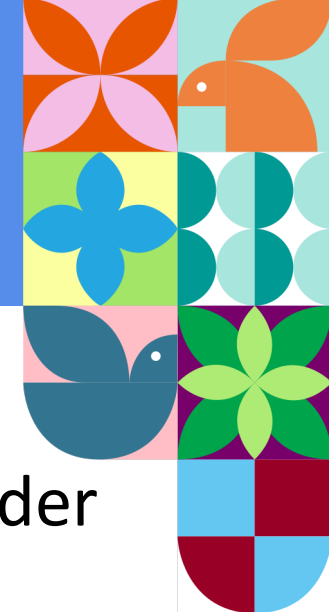
Food allergy can start at any age, even if you have eaten a food in the past without problems.



Food allergy reactions can sometimes lead to **death**.

Food allergy prevalence among children has been increasing for decades, up by 50% between 1997 and 2011, and again up by 50% between 2007 and 2021

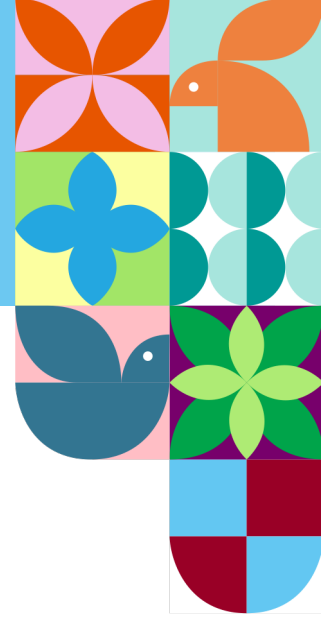
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)



Food allergies may constitute a disability under federal laws such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities

Common Symptoms of an Allergic Reaction

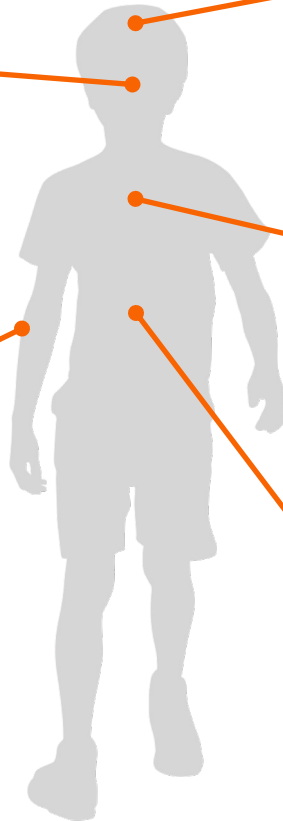


Mouth

- Itchy mouth or ear canal
- Nasal congestion or a runny nose
- Sneezing
- Slight, dry cough
- Odd taste in mouth
- Trouble swallowing
- Obstructive swelling of the lips, tongue, and/or throat

Skin

- Hives (reddish, swollen, itchy areas on the skin)
- Flushing
- Redness of the skin
- Turning blue



Emotional

- Sense of impending doom
- Change in alertness
- Mood change

Cardiovascular

- Drop in blood pressure (feeling faint, confused, weak, passing out)
- Loss of consciousness
- Chest pain
- A weak or “thready” pulse

Abdomen

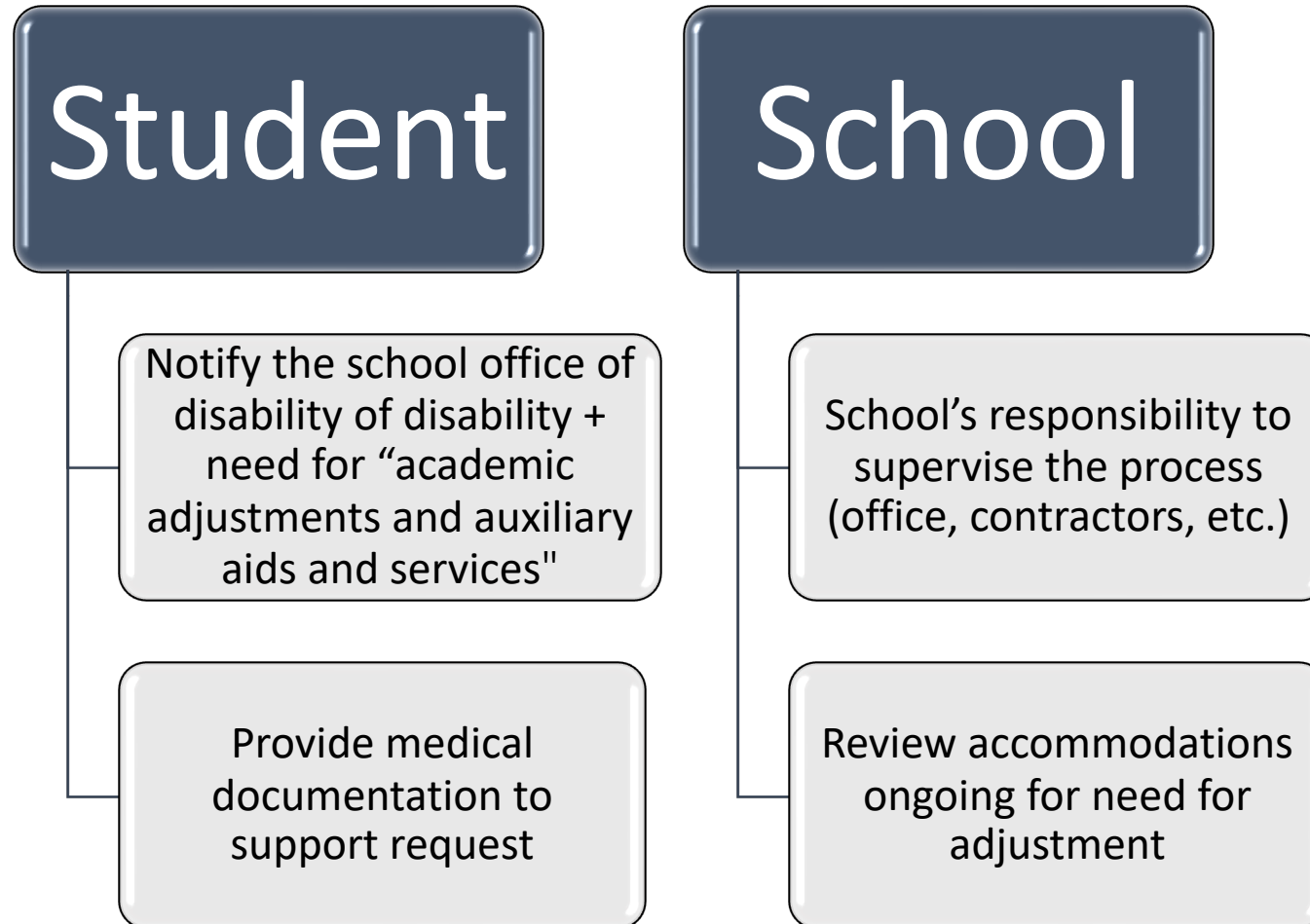
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Stomach pain
- Uterine contractions

Legal Cases

Rider University and **Lesley University** are two legal settlements that make clear that higher education institutions do **need to accommodate guests** with food allergies and celiac disease.

In both cases, students sued the universities for failing to accommodate their dietary restrictions and the Department of Justice agreed that the schools had violated the ADA.

ADA in Practice



Best practices in higher education based on the updated "Guidelines to Manage Food Allergies in Higher Education"

Consider the Statistics



1 in 3 kids with food allergies are bullied



15% parents surveyed do not go to restaurants



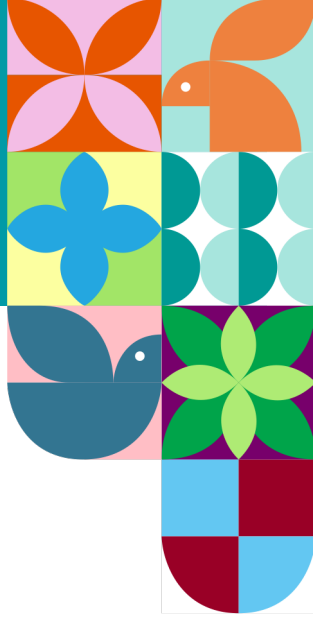
25% children do not participate in camp or sleepovers



10% avoid child-care settings or playdates at friends' houses

Teenagers and young adults with food allergies are at **the highest risk of fatal food-induced anaphylaxis**

Interactive + Collaborative Process

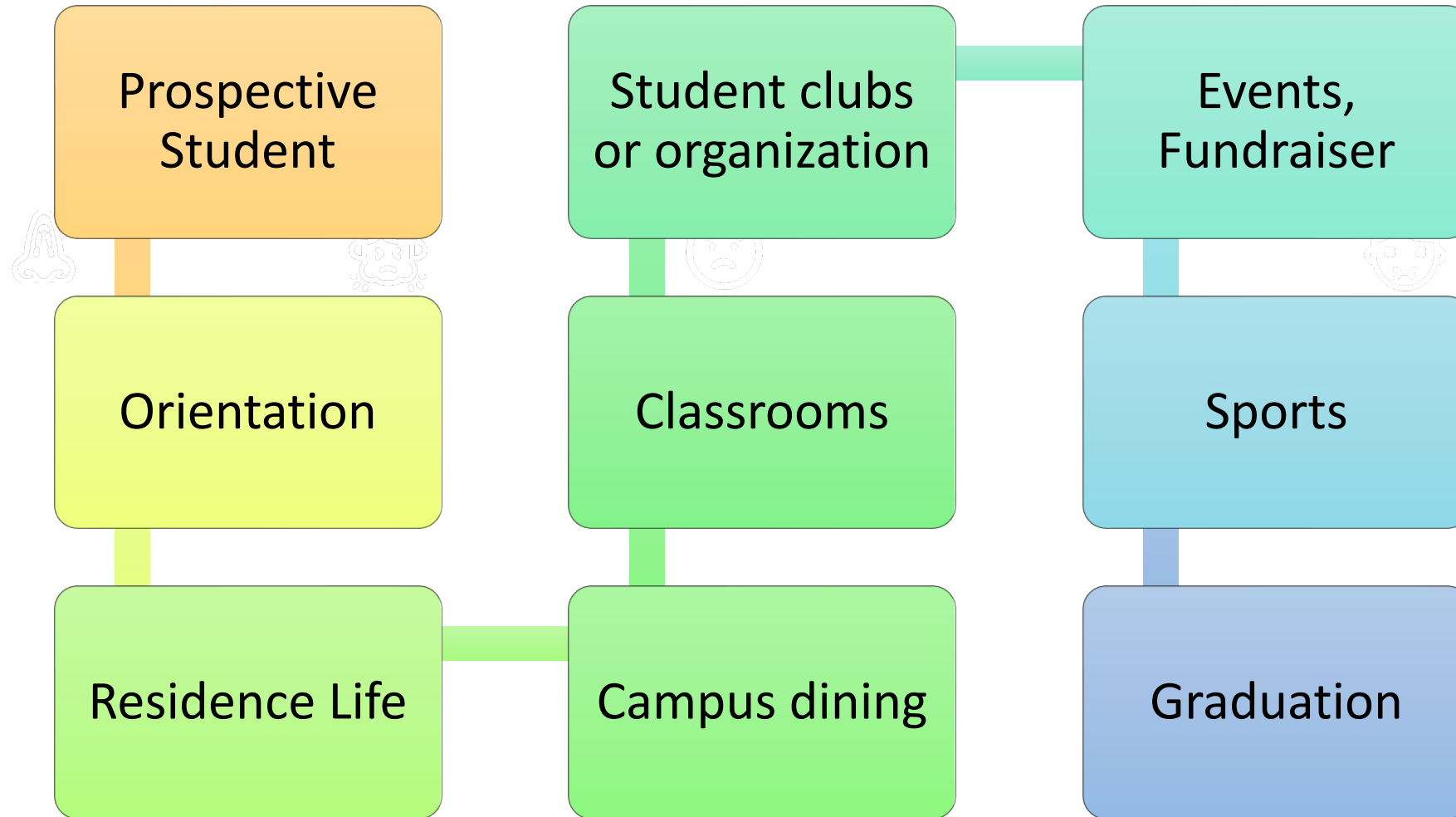


Mission: To keep students with food allergies safe and included on campus



Objective: Determine appropriate adjustments, including aids and services to meet individual students' needs through a single point of contact

College Experience



Disability Services



Single point of contact at the school to run point on the accommodations process

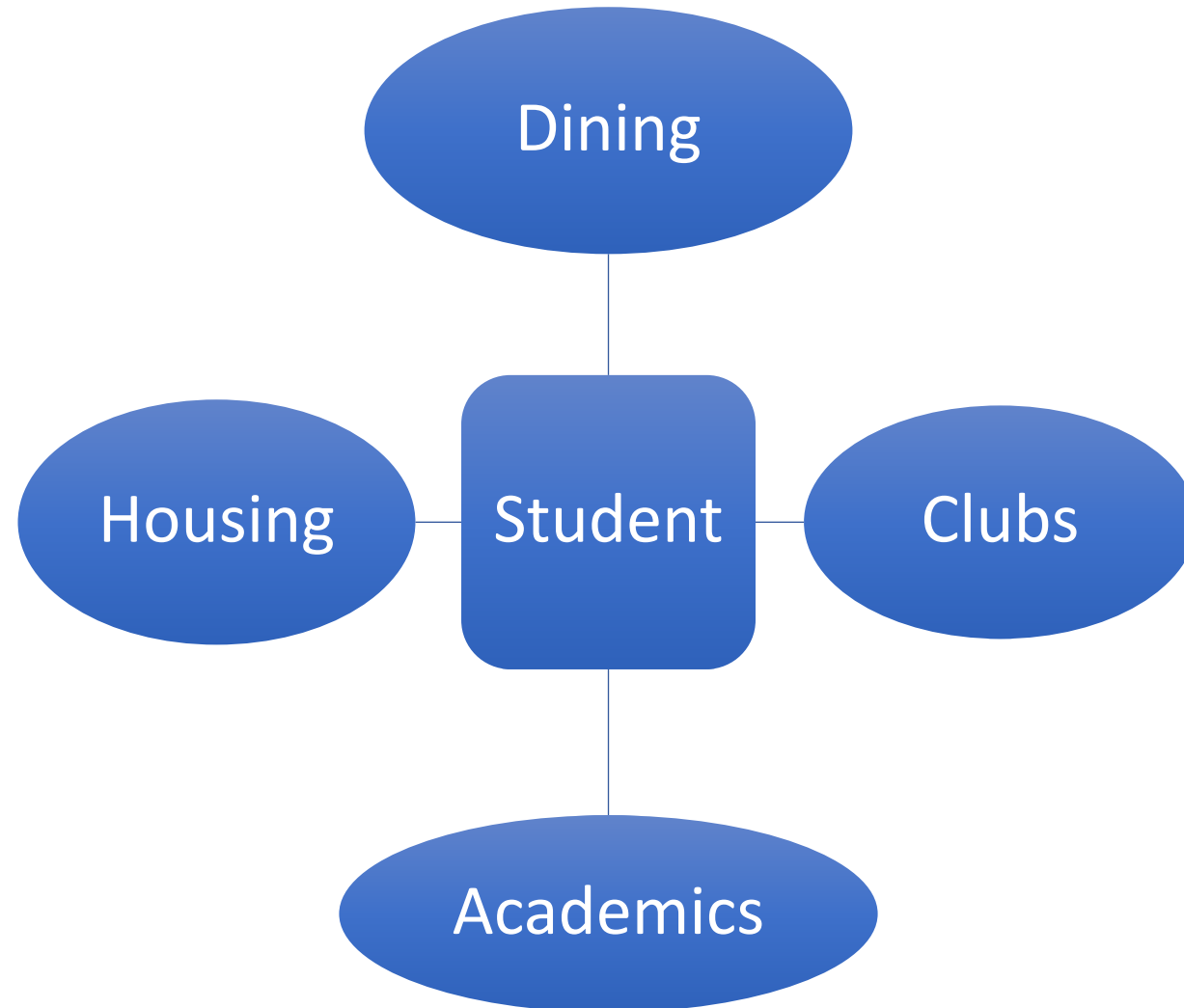


Establish review accommodations and periodically make adjustments as needed to best meet students need



Encourage students to self-disclose to office and staff across campus and advocate for needs

Life on Campus with Food Allergy



Residence Life + Housing

- Roommate selection
- Single room or room with a private bathroom
- Room near kitchen or with private kitchen
- Additional pre-approved cooking appliances (rice cookers, toaster oven, microwave, hot plate, etc.)
- Food pantry access

Student Health

- Collect pertinent student health information and maintain student privacy
- Provide on-site medical assistance, as needed
- Stock medication
- Refill prescription(s), if applicable

Dining Services

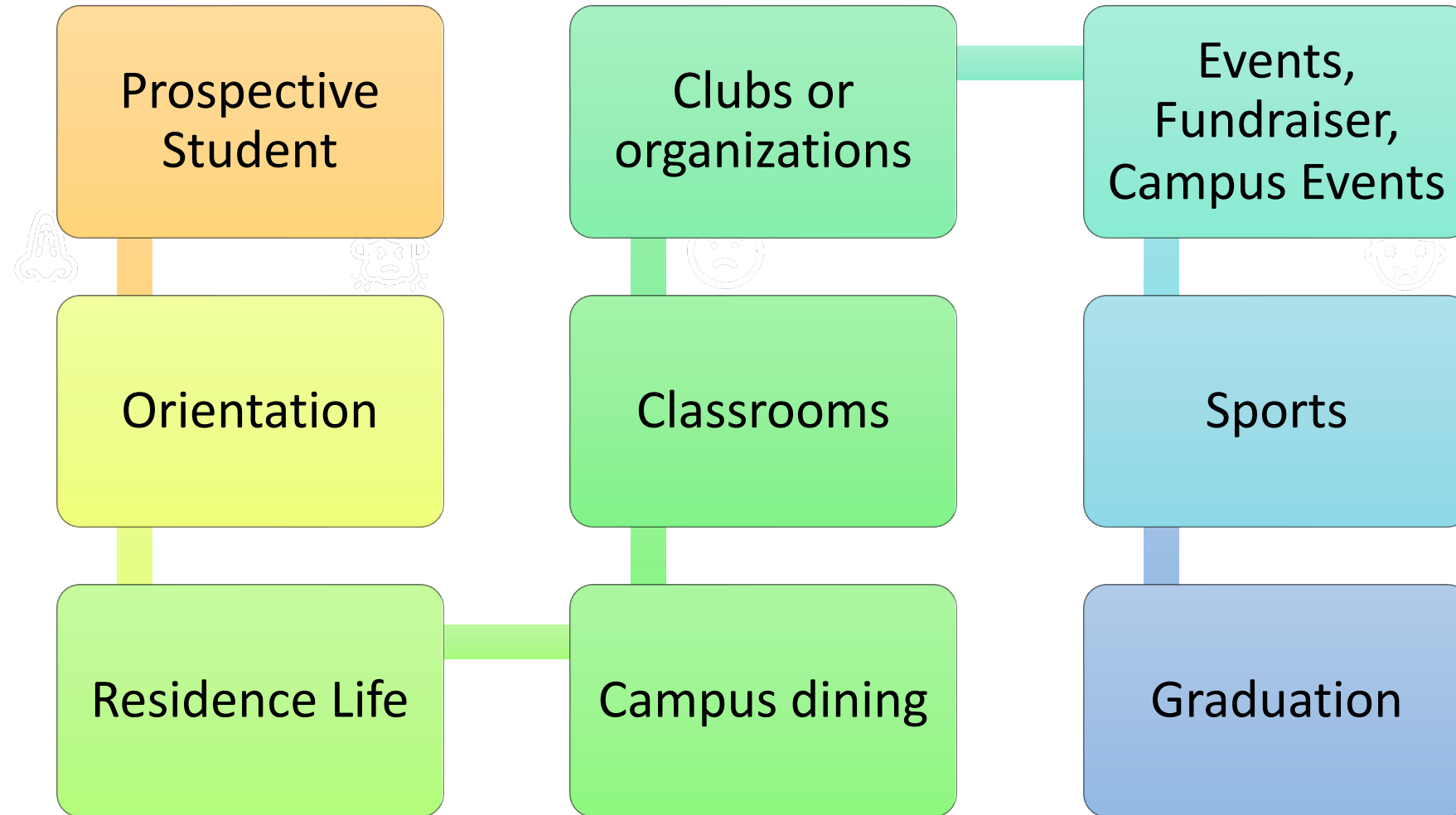
- Menu mix, stations, snack offerings
- Dining hall hours
- Staff training (upon hire, annually)
- Exclusive access to allergen pantry
- Exemptions/modifications to standard meal plans
- Campus concessions + vending machines
- Athletics: training room, travel days
- Campus wide events: Orientation, Graduation, school specific celebrations including holidays or theme nights

Academics + Extracurriculars

- Less common for food allergy accommodations
- Students should review class description and/or syllabus at the beginning of class to identify potential activities with allergens (cooking class, science lab, etc.)
- Extension for classroom assignments or tests in the event they experience an allergic reaction
- On-campus fundraisers, events, activities
- School sponsored clubs and organizations

Gaps in food allergy accommodations on campus

College Experience



Residence Life + Housing



Provide food pantry on campus with a list of convenient, nutritious foods that could be stocked for students needing additional food assistance



Keycard accessed private kitchen that is maintained as a dining kitchen would be maintained



Invite Accessibility or Disability Services Office to RAs' orientation to discuss ways to be inclusive of food allergy during events to build community in housing and how to recognize a reaction

Student Health



Provide shared awareness of students (with consent) across campus groups, including contractors



Stock epinephrine across campus (dining hall, residence halls, academic buildings)



Conduct emergency drills involving all campus groups (dining, health and campus responders)



Train all Student Health Center staff to respond to anaphylaxis

Approximately 20–25 percent of epinephrine administrations in schools involve individuals whose allergy was unknown at the time of the reaction

Dining Services



Menu Transparency

Provide up-to-date, full ingredient lists for students to make informed decisions



'Ask the Chef' Night

Formal or Informal Q&A Session to engage with campus chef



Daily Staff Huddles

Training should be continuous



Stock Epinephrine

Locate stock medication on campus, review Good Samaritan laws, and train staff to use it



Awareness Events

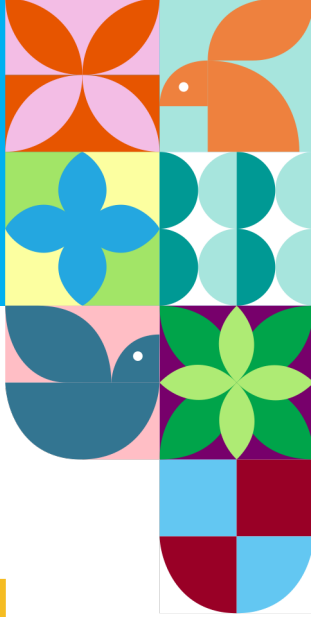
Plan wellness events with food allergy (and other dietary restrictions) in mind



Catering Services

Food allergy safe meal options should extend beyond dining hall

Academics + Extracurriculars



Classrooms

- Reimagine activities without food (does it have to be an egg drop?)

Clubs

- Plan events to include things outside food, e.g., a taco party + kickball game; maybe movie night or a concert

Campus Events

- Review menu mix with caterers for campus-wide events and theme nights

Athletes

- Add safe snack at the training center
- Adjust menus when on the road
- Train coaches on responding to a reaction

Attendees

- Consider event's concession menu mix

Summary



Food allergy can be considered a disability, and colleges and universities have legal obligations of to meet the students' needs

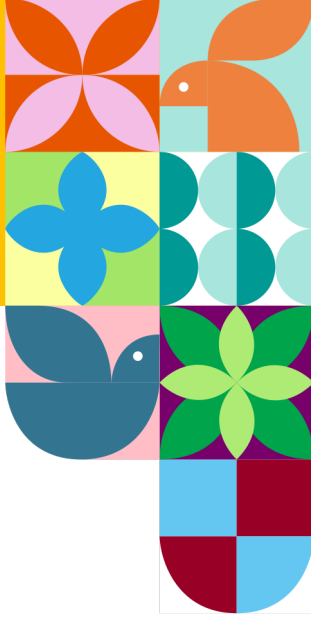


"Guidelines to Manage Food Allergies in Higher Education" can help shape new practices on campus



Discover gaps food allergy accommodations on your campus and brainstorm solutions with your team to keep students safe and included on campus

Ongoing Study



Researchers from the Division of Allergy at the University of Rochester are conducting a study to better **understand the unique experiences of students managing food allergies** while living away from home. This survey aims to explore the challenges you face and the factors that impact effective allergy management during college life.

Who is eligible to participate?

- ✓ You are 18 years or older.
- ✓ You have IgE-mediated food allergies.
- ✓ You currently live away from home while attending college.



Your insights will contribute to advancing medical understanding and help guide healthcare

teams in providing better support for students managing food allergies in the future.

💡 Your voice matters—thank you for helping to shape the future of allergy care:

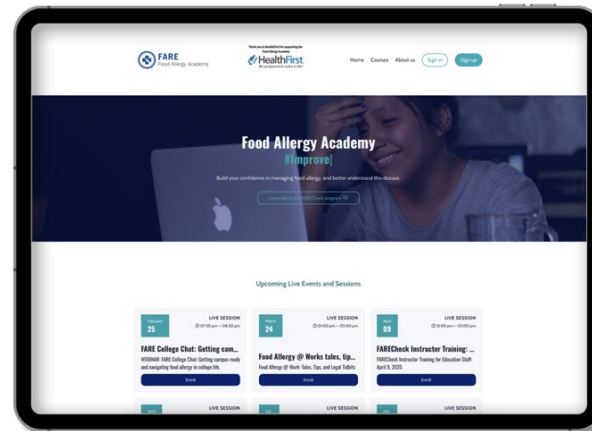
<https://lnkd.in/eDb-D3EE>



Resources: Food Allergy Academy

Free courses and training for schools, food service workers, healthcare providers, patients, parents, and more. Topics include:

- How to use epinephrine
- Guidelines to manage food allergy in higher education
- FARECheck training



www.foodallergyacademy.org

THANK YOU

Tiffany Leon, MS, RD
tleon@foodallergy.org



FARE
It's good for everyone.



If you're interested in resources,
scan here for more information.

www.FoodAllergy.org

Citations

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