
Tree Nut and Peanut Food Allergens

What is the difference between tree nuts and peanuts?

Almonds, brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts (filberts), macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts (pignolias), pistachio nuts and walnuts are all considered **tree nuts**.

Peanuts are part of the legume family, and are not considered a tree nut.

How can I tell if a food contains tree nuts or peanuts?

- Read product ingredient labels carefully to make sure they don't list any source of tree nuts or peanuts in the food. Often, different names are used for tree nuts and peanuts. See the Health Canada fact sheets found at the websites below for other common names to watch for on ingredient lists. Avoid foods and products that do not have an ingredient list.
- Read labels **every time** you shop. Manufacturers may occasionally change their recipes or use different ingredients.
- Be cautious of bulk food items. They may be contaminated with trace amounts of nuts.

Watch out for allergen cross contamination

Cross contamination is the transfer of an ingredient (food allergen) to a product that does not normally have

that ingredient in it. Through cross contamination, a food that should not contain the allergen could become dangerous to eat for those who are allergic.

Cross contamination can happen:

- During **food manufacturing**, through shared production and packaging equipment.
- At **retail stores**, through shared equipment (e.g. cheese and deli meats sliced on the same slicer) and through bulk display of food products (e.g. bins of baked goods, bulk nuts).
- During **food preparation** at home or in restaurants through equipment, utensils, and hands. For example, if the same knife used to put peanut butter on toast at breakfast is also used to make a sandwich for lunch and has not been washed well in-between, then the sandwich may have traces of peanuts. The sandwich would not be safe to send to a peanut aware school or child care setting.

For more information:

- Tree Nuts – <http://foodallergycanada.ca/about-allergies/food-allergens/tree-nuts/>
- Peanuts – <http://foodallergycanada.ca/about-allergies/food-allergens/peanuts/>