

Identifying Allergens: Milk

Retail Food Establishments – Food Safety



A food allergen is an ingredient that contains a certain protein(s) in a food, or a drink that causes a reaction. Symptoms can vary based on such factors as the:

- Food or beverage consumed,
- Person's sensitivity to the allergen, and
- Type of reaction to the allergen.

Symptoms often occur within a few minutes, or a couple of hours after eating. However, in some cases symptoms may appear several hours, or days after eating.



R.61-25, Chapter 3, Section 3-602.11 requires labeling of grab-and-go foods and bulk customer self-service foods in a retail food establishment. Along with listing all ingredients in these foods, the label must clearly identify all major food allergens in the product.

Labeling does not apply to table service or foods packaged for a to-go order. Customers with allergy concerns may ask questions about ingredients, or how a product is prepared. As a person-in-charge, a server, or other food staff, you play an important role in helping the customer make informed decisions about their food choices.



Milk is listed as one of the major food allergens.

MILK

This allergen category refers to milk and milk products that generally come from a dairy.

Cow's milk is usually the cause of a milk allergy reaction. However, milk from goats, sheep and other milk producing animals could also cause an allergic reaction.

Examples of milk product groups, related by-products, and foods that are generally known to include products derived from milk (milk derivatives) as an ingredient are:

- **Milk** (e.g., buttermilk, skimmed, condensed, evaporated, powdered, half & half),
- **Butter** (e.g., ghee, margarine),
- **Cheese** (e.g., curds, cheddar, Swiss, processed cheese),
- **Cream** (e.g., sour cream, whipped cream, heavy cream),
- **Yogurt,**
- **Custard,**
- **Cold/Frozen Desserts and Treats** (e.g., ice cream, gelato, pudding, sherbert, milkshakes, smoothies),
- **Batters (including boxed mixes)** (e.g., cake, pancake, waffle, fried food).



A milk derivative is any ingredient that is obtained from milk through various processes. Examples of milk derivatives that may be listed on a food label are:

- **Casein** (all forms),
- **Caseinate** (all forms),
- **Whey** (all forms).

Milk, milk by-products and milk derivatives are added as an ingredient in more foods than can be listed here. It is important to be aware of menu items that may contain milk. Some are obvious while others are not as obvious, for example:

- Breads,
- Cookies,
- Frosting,
- Gravy,
- Chocolate,
- Flavored potato chips,
- Lunch and deli meats,
- Hot dogs,
- Non-dairy creamers (Yes, really.),
- Creamy sauces, soups, and salad dressings.



Additional information and guidance on **Major Food Allergens** may be found in [Regulation 61-25, Retail Food Establishments](#), Chapter 1, Section 1-201.10(B)(64) and the Conference for Food Protection, [CFP - Major Food Allergen Framework](#).

