

Welcome to KSU Culinary Services!

University Culinary Services supports students with various dietary needs by providing information necessary for the student to make informed food choices in our dining locations. We work together with campus partners with a goal of providing a safe and supportive transition to college life while helping students take an active role in managing their own food allergies, specific diets, or medical needs. Kent State will work with students to identify options to meet dietary accommodations for gluten-friendly, vegetarian/vegan, and allergen-specific needs.

Please be aware that we work with egg, milk, wheat, shellfish, fish, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, and other allergens very often within our dining facilities.

We always provide nutrition information that is as accurate as possible, however that does not always stop cross contact when many foods are being prepared at once. Guests with food allergies or specific dietary concerns should speak with the senior manager, chef, or person in charge for assistance.

Please direct any questions regarding an allergy or food ingredients to the registered dietitian or a chef/manager on duty at the dining hall.

Tips for Managing a Food Allergy in Dining Locations

1. Connect with your dietitian! Schedule a meeting with our registered dietitian by completing the form at kent.edu/dining/contact-your-registered-dietitian

- Students seeking dietary accommodations or counseling for reasons that are not allergy-related (including religious or personal reasons) may also contact the Registered Dietitian to discuss their options using this form.

2. Talk to your healthcare provider about a plan to self-manage allergies. This may include:

- Avoid the foods to which you are allergic
- Recognize symptoms of allergic reactions
- Tell someone when you might be having an allergic reaction
- Know how to properly use medication when having a reaction
- Always carry emergency contact information with you

3. Read over the station menus carefully on the menu board or the website

4. When in doubt about what is in a food, direct any questions you may have to the manager, chef, or person in charge. If you do not know who these individuals are, please ask an employee to contact them.

5. If you have been prescribed an EpiPen, always carry it with you.

6. If you notice something problematic for your allergy, please notify the registered dietitian.

Your Role

KSU strives to provide our guests who have food allergies or food intolerances with the necessary information so they may make confident food choices. However, it is important for those guests to help manage their food allergies or intolerances by doing the following to avoid cross-contamination:

- Always check menu boards and nutrition panels for allergen information.
- You may ask a culinary services employee to change their gloves.
- You may ask a culinary services employee to use a new utensil or fresh pan at made-to-order stations.
- Take caution with deep-fried foods. Frying oil is reused before being changed. This can lead to cross contact because food fried in oil releases some of its protein, which is then absorbed by other foods.
- If you have been prescribed an EpiPen, carry it with you and have a plan for how you will use it if needed.
- Wear a medical ID that tells paramedics about your allergy, and inform others who may need to know.

Resources

The following services are available from Kent State to help you manage your food allergy:

- An individual meeting with the KSU Dietitian to receive information and develop an individualized plan to help you navigate the residential dining facilities.
- The senior managers, chefs, and people in charge on duty are available in residential dining halls and retail locations to address questions/concerns and serve as important resources. When in a particular unit, please ask for a food service manager or email the dietitian at dietitians@kent.edu.
- Manufacturer-provided ingredient lists, provided upon request
- Signage located at each food station in our residential dining locations outlines nutrition information
- Student Accessibility Services (SAS) is available for any disability accommodation that may be necessary. Students are encouraged to first work with the dietitian to determine how to best manage a food allergy, but formal accommodations may also be available through SAS.

Specific Allergy Information

While general information is provided below for specific allergens, please further refer to the menus and ingredient information made available to you. We use manufacturer-provided information, and the registered dietitian periodically reviews ingredients to verify ingredient labeling is consistent with what is provided by the manufacturer. Ingredients listed may be subject to change without notification.

Wheat/Gluten Allergies

At our Gluten Solutions stations, we offer gluten-friendly food. We use the term "Gluten Friendly" to identify dishes made without gluten-containing ingredients. Since gluten can be airborne for 24 hours, we cannot use the term gluten-free for items made in-house. We also offer a variety of gluten-friendly pizzas, lunch meats, breads, hamburgers, and sandwiches.

Milk Allergies

A non-dairy milk option is available every day in our all-you-care-to-eat dining facilities. However, milk and milk-based products (such as butter and margarine) are ingredients used in many of the menu items served. Please utilize nutrition information provided on menu boards and labels to avoid the allergen.

Soy Allergies

Highly refined soybean oil is used in a variety of our products. Although research has shown that highly refined soybean oil is safe to consume for most people with a soy allergy and does not need to be marked as an allergen, if a medical professional has noted that you have a severe allergy, you should consider alternate options.

Egg Allergies

Many of our baked goods and desserts contain eggs. Students are asked to take caution with all baked goods and are encouraged to check ingredient labels of all items they wish to eat.

Fish/Shellfish Allergies

Some entrees and mixed dishes will contain fishes or shellfish, as well as some items such as Worcestershire sauce, gravies, and dishes prepared with Asian sauces may include fish. Please check the menus and full ingredient lists.

Peanut Allergies

Peanuts and peanut butter are present in a limited amount of our recipes and baked goods. Students with a peanut allergy are advised to take caution with baker items. Peanut oil is generally not used as an ingredient in our recipes, but always check full ingredient list.

Tree Nut Allergies

Tree nuts may be present in items such as baked goods, pesto, and on our salad bars (such as slivered almonds or shredded coconut). Tree nuts will be indicated by the specific type of tree nut. Please refer to the menus and full ingredient list.

Food Allergy Disclaimer

Kent State University does not guarantee the accuracy of nutrition information provided on this site and nutrition labels in the dining halls; ingredients and nutrition content of foods may vary due to changes in product formulation, portion size and other factors as needed. The nutrition analyses here provide some degree of variability. Guests with food allergies, food intolerances, or other special diets that require abstaining from certain food items should contact a chef or dining manager for specific ingredient questions when in the dining facility. For questions you may also contact our campus dietitian by emailing dietitians@kent.edu.

Here at KSU, we've developed a plan with students who have special dietary needs to contact KSU Culinary Services:

- **Student contacts Registered Dietitian (RD) to discuss needs. Students who contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) first will be directed to first meet with the RD.**
- **RD will meet with the student to discuss needs and options available in the dining facilities. If the options do not meet the student's needs and the student discloses an allergy, medical need, or other possible disability, the RD will refer the student to SAS. Requests for other reasons will be handled through internal University Culinary Services processes.**
- **SAS will gather information from the student and review documentation. If the allergy or medical condition rises to the level of disability, SAS will determine reasonable accommodations for the student for both dining and housing situations.**
 - a. Housing accommodations (such as having access to a specific residence hall or kitchen, an extra fridge to store food, or access to a cabinet to store cooking supplies) will be communicated to University Housing using the standard housing accommodation mechanism. Students who live on campus will need to alert SAS if they need access to the same accommodations in subsequent years.
 - b. Dining plan accommodations (such as being exempt from or having a reduced meal plan) will be sent via email to the Registered Dietitian. The RD will direct students to any necessary paperwork to complete the process

Q: Should I assume what the ingredients are in a menu item, based on the information provided above?

A: Please do not ever assume. We have different products based off our vendors' availability, so an ingredient we use today can potentially be a different brand from time to time. The safest and most reliable practice is to view the allergen information provided in the dining hall every time you dine.

Q: Who should I ask or talk to about a question on the menu while in the dining hall?

A: Always ask the manager or chef to assist you with identifying allergens while in the dining hall. If you are unsure of who the manager or chef is, please ask any employee to locate them for you.

Q: What's the difference between Gluten-Free and Gluten-Friendly?

A: Gluten Friendly means our products do not include any fresh or manufactured food that contains gluten. Gluten Free means the food item contains less than 20 ppm of gluten, which can only be determined through laboratory testing. Since we prepare products in common kitchens with shared equipment, it is not possible that our products can maintain gluten-free status as established by the manufacturer.