

Allergen information and labelling for consumers

Food businesses must inform customers if any products they provide contain any of the 14 regulated allergens as an ingredient.

There are several ways in which you can be provided with allergen information. This can depend on the type of food you buy and the type of food business you order from.

Prepacked food and allergen labelling

The 14 allergens must be emphasised within the ingredients list of pre-packed food or drink. This can be done, for example, by using bold, italic or coloured type, to make the allergen ingredients easier to spot.

Non-prepacked (loose) food and allergen labelling

Food businesses such as a bakery, butcher, or delicatessen, must provide you with allergen information for any loose item you buy that contains any of the 14 allergens. Allergen information can be provided in either written, or verbal form. If providing this information verbally, the food business must signpost to where it can be found.

Prepacked for Direct Sale (PPDS) and allergen labelling

From 1 October 2021, [PPDS food must have a label that displays a full ingredients list](#). Allergenic ingredients must be emphasised on it.

This information should not replace or prevent you from having a conversation about your allergy requirements with the food business.

Eating out and allergens

[When you eat out or order a takeaway](#), the restaurant or café must provide you with allergen information. This could be allergen information on their menu or a prompt explaining how you can get this information. This may include advice that you ask a member of staff about the allergen contents of a dish you might want to order.

If you come across a business that is not meeting allergen guidance requirements you can report it. Use our [report a food problem tool](#) to let the local authority where the business is based know.

Precautionary allergen labelling (may contain)

Precautionary allergen labels are used to inform customers that allergens may be unintentionally present in a food product, due to cross-contamination. These are commonly seen as 'may contain [allergen]' or 'not suitable for people with a [x allergy]'.

Allergen cross-contamination can happen at any point in the food supply chain.

There is no specific legal requirement for food businesses to label food with 'may contain'. But, food must be safe to eat and information must be provided to help people with allergies make safe choices, and manage their condition.