

353 Food Allergies

Definition/Cut-off Value

An adverse immune response to a food or a hypersensitivity that causes adverse immunologic reaction.

Presence of condition diagnosed, documented, or reported by a physician or someone working under a physician's orders, or as self reported by applicant/participant/caregiver. See Clarification for more information about self-reporting a diagnosis.

Participant Category and Priority Level

Category	Priority
Pregnant Women	I
Breastfeeding Women	I
Non-Breastfeeding Women	III, IV, V or VI
Infants	I
Children	III

Justification

The only way to avoid a food allergy reaction is to eliminate the food. This requires the assistance of a nutritionist to help individuals obtain nutrients from other food sources (1).

The goal is to remove from the diet as many potential food allergens as possible while also providing optimal nutrition. Treatment of food allergies by a registered dietitian or competent professional authority not only improves compliance by ensuring strict dietary avoidance through education and appropriate substitution, but also is essential for ensuring the nutritional adequacy of the diet (2).

References

1. Zeman FJ. Clinical nutrition and dietetics. New York: Macmillan Pub. Co, 1991. p.149-185.
2. Queen PM, Helm KK, Lang CE. Handbook of pediatric nutrition. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers, 1999.

Clarification

Self-reporting of a diagnosis by a medical professional should not be confused with self-diagnosis, where a person simply claims to have or to have had a medical condition without any reference to professional diagnosis. A self-reported medical diagnosis ("My doctor says that I have/my son or daughter has...") should prompt the CPA to validate the presence of the condition by asking more pointed questions related to that diagnosis.