

Subject: Nut-Free Policy	Reviewed by: Safety Team
Date Created: 9/28/23	Document Owner: Clinic

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to raise awareness and provide supporting data regarding Saint Mary's Catholic School being a nut-free school. This policy will assist to keep students and staff safe by providing guidance on how to prevent nut containing items being brought into the school, manage possible exposure or cross contamination, and prepare for allergic reactions or anaphylaxis emergency situations.

**Background:**

Peanut and/or Tree nut allergies are the second most common food allergies in children. Peanuts are also the most likely food to cause anaphylaxis or a life-threatening emergency. Although most life-threatening reactions are triggered by ingested foods, serious reactions can also occur from skin contact, eye contact and inhalation of food particles. In young children, even though the initial contact might be on the hands or arms, the reaction can spread through scratching and rubbing of the face and eyes.

In our small, but growing community, about 10% of the student population suffer from some sort of food allergy, half of which includes peanut or tree nut allergies. We as a school strive to minimize the risk of exposure, encourage self-responsibility and develop a plan for effective response to potential incidents. Although we recognize that this cannot be completely guaranteed, we at Saint Mary's aim to be a Nut-Free school.

**Guidelines:**

We ask that no nuts of any kind be brought into the school for any reason. Foods sent in for snack, lunch or any class event should be carefully checked to make sure they are nut-free. Remind children not to share food with other children while at school.

- **Reading Labels:**

- Families can help to ensure that our school stays nut-free by reading the labels
- Ingredients and labels change frequently so please read the labels carefully every time to verify the product is nut-free prior to bring it to school
- If the treat, snack or product label contains any type of nut or the following phrases, we are unable to serve it at school
  - "May contain peanut or tree nuts."
  - "Processed on shared equipment with peanuts or tree nuts."
  - "Manufactured in a plant that also processes peanuts or tree nuts."
  - "Contains peanut or tree nuts"

- **Special Occasions, Birthdays & Class Parties:**

- No homemade treats or snacks can be brought into the classroom. All treats and snacks must be store bought and have a food label visible to avoid the potential for cross contamination and ensure safety and cleanliness.
- If your child has a known food allergy, you may bring in an “alternative” snack/treat for them to keep in the classroom or clinic to ensure they have a safe option on these special occasions. *If you choose to do this, please send in a treat that is non-perishable or that can be kept in the freezer to maintain freshness.*
- Please review this [Nut-Free Suggestions List](#) which provides some guidance on safe foods to bring to school. *The purpose of this list is to serve as a helpful guide and does not include all possible nut-free options. **Remember labels and ingredients change frequently; always read the labels carefully.***
- If you have questions regarding whether something is safe to bring to school, please contact the nurses at [clinic@saintmary.org](mailto:clinic@saintmary.org)

**Resources:**

<https://www.foodallergy.org>

<https://snacksafely.com/safe-snack-guide/>