

Williams

Guide to Managing Food Allergies



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Our Philosophy

Williams College Dining Services takes great care in providing information, knowledge and resources necessary for students to make informed food choices in all of our dining locations. We work closely with Health Services, the Office of Accessible Education and Residential Life to provide reasonable arrangements so that students can participate in as many on-campus experiences as possible. We recognize that students with food allergies may already experience a more limited diet than those who do not have an allergy, and are required to exert more time and effort in managing their diet than others. We consider each individual student's personal dietary needs and make every effort to provide helpful information needed to safely navigate the Williams College Dining landscape.

Our goal is to provide students with the tools they need to be active in the management of their food allergy or food-related medical condition within the dining locations in ways that provide a safe and supportive transition into college life.

Williams College Dining believes that good nutrition is essential to good health and well-being. That is why we are committed to nourishing each and every student by providing fresh, flavorful, healthy and nutritious foods every day.

Special Dietary Need Policy & Information

What to do if you have a food allergy or other special dietary need?

Prior to dining at Williams College, please fill out a Food Allergy Advisory Form and direct any questions to our dining services nutritionist, Allyse, at aw16@williams.edu. Students with food allergies or celiac disease: be aware that we prepare egg, milk, wheat (and other gluten containing products), shellfish, fish, soy, sesame and other potential allergens in our dining halls. We also have peanut butter in designated nut zones within our dining halls, as well as ingredients that have been processed on shared equipment or in facilities that process nuts in some of our recipes. Before selecting a food item, please inform the chef or dining manager if you or a person in your party has a food allergy.

Policy for Obtaining Reasonable Accommodations for Dining

To request an accommodation on the basis of disability due to a food allergy, celiac disease or other dietary need with medical implications, Williams College students should contact the Office of Accessible Education at OAEstaff@williams.edu.

The Office of Accessible Education will advise students through the interactive process as to what supporting medical documentation will be required.

Let us Know

Many students are able to eat safely from our regular dining program; however, reasonable accommodations can be made for students with severe food allergies, celiac disease and other special dietary needs with appropriate medical documentation.

1. **Get to Know Dining Services** - It's important to meet and communicate directly with Dining Services staff. They will be working daily to provide safe meals. Notify Williams College Dining Services of your food allergy as early as possible by completing the online [Food Allergy Advisory Form](#).
2. **Work with the Office of Accessible Education**- Did you know some food allergies may be covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act? To learn more about the ADA, visit <https://www.ada.gov/>. The Office of Accessible Education can be a valuable partner to students with food allergies by helping them stay safe and included. Register with Disability Support Services/Accessible Education to determine what accommodations can be made regarding housing, dining services, health services and academic life by contacting the Office of Accessible Education at (413) 597-4672 or OAEstaff@williams.edu.
3. **Stay on Top of Your Health Care** - An important part of managing your food allergies is having a plan. First-year and transfer students must submit required health forms to the Williams College Health Center. Contact Health Services at (413) 597-2206 for information on epinephrine prescriptions.
4. **Live Safely in Your Dorm** - Talk with your roommate about how you will handle food storage, preparation, as well as eating in your dorm. Consider sharing your Emergency Care Plan with your Resident Advisor, roommate, or friends. The Office of Accessible Education can also let you know if you qualify for special housing accommodations.

Your Management

It is critical for students to help manage their food allergies/intolerances/dietary restrictions in campus dining locations. Take the time to understand your responsibilities and learn about the resources available to you.

1.

Schedule a meeting with the Dining Services Nutritionist and Executive Chef to discuss your options and develop a plan so you can navigate the dining halls. To make an appointment, call the Dining Services Nutritionist, Allyse Wiencek MS, LDN at (413) 597-6760 or email her aw16@williams.edu.

2.

If you feel you need special dietary accommodations contact the office of Accessible Education to see what options are available to you (413) 597-4672 or OAEstaff@williams.edu

3.

Do not consume foods and ingredients to which you are allergic. Never take chances by eating or drinking something with no ingredient information.

4.

Read the menus and ingredient information that are made available to you at <http://dining.williams.edu/menus-nutrition/> to be better informed and plan ahead. Our website menus display the entire ingredient list for every menu item that is served.*

5.

When in doubt regarding ingredients or preparation of a particular food, direct your questions to a chef or the onsite Dining Unit Manager. If you do not know who these individuals are, please ask any Dining Services staff.

6.

Due to the self-serve nature of campus dining halls, cross-contact is possible. If you have an epinephrine auto-injector, carry it with you at all times and be prepared to use it. **Dining Services Staff is NOT trained or authorized to administer an epinephrine auto-injector.**

7.

If you have any questions or notice something that is problematic for your allergy, please notify the Dining Services Nutritionist, Executive Chef or onsite Dining Unit Manager so they can address your concern. Remember - we won't know there's a problem unless you tell us about it. If we do not hear from you, we believe that you are successfully navigating the dining locations.

*We obtain ingredient information from our vendors and cannot guarantee accuracy. Speak with the chef to verify ingredients if you have food allergies.

In Case of a Reaction

If you are exhibiting symptoms of an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis, please take the following steps:

1. Administer your epinephrine auto-injector as prescribed by your physician. Dining Services Staff is NOT trained or authorized to administer an epinephrine auto-injector.
2. Get help immediately - call 911 or indicate to someone around you to call 911. A call to 911 will automatically alert campus and village emergency responders.
3. Notify Williams College Dining Services at x2121 and the Student Health Center at x2206 as soon as possible about your experience for follow-up and continued care as needed.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN PRESCRIBED AN EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTOR, YOU SHOULD CARRY IT WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES.

Tips for Avoiding Allergens

Students with food allergies should speak with the Dining Services Nutritionist or a chef if they have any concerns about specific recipes or ingredients on our service lines.

Clean Cuisine Station

Whitmans dining hall has a Clean Cuisine station which is separate from their regular buffet line. The food on this station is prepared in a dedicated kitchen which is free from 8 of the top 9 allergens (peanut, tree-nut (except for coconut), milk, egg, fish, shellfish, sesame and gluten). Both the kitchen and the dedicated service area are surface tested regularly for all of the above allergens and audited by both the Dining Services Nutritionist and members of MenuTrinfo to ensure compliance to the MenuTrinfo Kitchens with Confidence Certified Free From standards. There are two food allergy trained chefs dedicated to the preparation of this food. This station offers “clean” simply prepared recipes with both vegan and non-vegan options. We also exclude garlic and onion from this station to better serve our students who are sensitive to FODMaPs. Please note that this station does include the following top allergens in their recipes: **soy and coconut.**

Peanuts

Peanut products are placed in designated zones in each dining unit to minimize the possibility of cross-contact. Recipes containing peanuts and peanut oil have been removed from the Student Dining Program, however, there are still ingredients that are processed in facilities that also process nuts. Students with a peanut allergy are advised to use caution with bakery items due to shared equipment and shared production space. We operate nut-free salad bars and offer a variety of nut-free cereals. Alternative nut butters can be made available if needed. Many medical experts advise persons allergic to peanuts to avoid tree nuts as well.

Tree Nuts

Tree nuts may be present in select cultural themed meals. Students with a tree nut allergy are advised to use caution with bakery items due to shared equipment and shared production space. Williams College Dining operates nut-free salad bars to help reduce (but not eliminate) the potential of cross- contact. A variety of nut-free cereals is also available. Our in-house recipe for pesto is free of pine nuts. It is also important for tree-nut allergic students to be aware that almond milk is offered in all dining units as a milk alternative.

Fish & Shellfish

Entrees and mixed dishes prepared with fish or shellfish appear on the menu. Some dishes, particularly Asian cuisine, are prepared with fish sauce. We also use Worcestershire sauce, curry paste and Caesar dressing which may contain fish or shellfish as an ingredient.

Soy

Williams College Dining uses canola oil and olive oil for all cooking and food preparation. Tofu, tempeh and soy yogurts are often included on our service menu, as well as ingredients that may contain soy lecithin.

Milk

Students will find a lactose free main course on our service menu at each meal period. Soy milk, Oat milk, almond milk and Lactaid® are available every day in campus dining facilities. We also offer dairy free yogurt, cream cheese and sour cream alternatives. However, milk and milk-based products are ingredients used in many of the menu items served. In addition, some manufactured items may contain milk in a variety of different forms.

Egg

Many of our baked goods and desserts contain eggs. Eggs are also present in mayonnaise. Students are asked to use caution with all baked goods and are encouraged to check ingredient labels of items they wish to eat. While the whites of an egg contain the allergenic proteins, people with an egg allergy must avoid all eggs completely.

Wheat

We offer a selection of gluten-free deli meats, salad dressings, cereals, bread, tortillas and pasta daily. Williams College Dining also uses gluten-free chicken, beef and vegetable bases in preparation of soups, sauces, gravies and casseroles. Be sure to check the ingredients of all foods you wish to consume. If you have any questions, just ask the on-site Dining Unit Manager or any dining staff for more information.**

***Even foods prepared without gluten-containing ingredients may not be 'gluten-free'. Our recipes are prepared in open kitchens which may include shared ovens and flat top grills where cross-contact is possible and where ingredient substitutions are sometimes made. If you have Celiac disease or gluten sensitivity, choose items from our Clean Cuisine station at Whitmans or ask to speak with a chef/manager to see if safe options are available.*

Coconut & Sesame

Williams College Dining uses sesame, coconut and their derivative oils as ingredients in some of our recipes and label accordingly. Because the FDA defines coconut as a tree nut, any manufactured product containing coconut or its derivative oil will be labeled as "contains tree nuts" under the Food Allergy Labeling and Consumer Act (FALCPA). However, until January 2023, sesame is not covered under FALCPA. We cannot say for certain that sesame is not added as a spice or natural flavor in foods delivered to our facilities. Speak with the dining services nutritionist you need to avoid coconut or sesame.

Avoiding Cross-Contact

Cross-contact occurs when one food item comes into contact with another food item and their proteins are unintentionally mixed, creating the potential for an allergic reaction. Since many foods in the campus dining halls are self-serve, cross-contact is possible. Williams College Dining Services provides separate serving utensils for each item and frequently changes utensils in an attempt to mitigate customer cross-contact. We also work to educate employees involved in food production to change gloves and clean utensils between recipes in order to reduce cross-contact concerns.

Each cook/front-line associate adheres to standardized recipes and does not introduce any ingredient to the recipe that is not on the recipe card. Regular production audits are performed to assess recipe adherence and production process and to stay informed of newly purchased products.

If you are concerned about cross-contact:

- Speak with the Dining Services Nutritionist to identify the best options for your unique needs.
- Ask the dining employee handling your food to change their gloves or use clean utensils.
- Ask the dining employee handling your food to use a fresh pan at made-to-order stations.
- Ask the dining employee to serve your menu items from the back of the house that have not yet come in contact with the serving bar.
- Review allergen and ingredient information online at <https://dining.williams.edu/menus-nutrition>

We make every effort to provide you with the information you need to make decisions about which foods to eat in the campus dining halls. However, the possibility for a reaction exists in any community, self-serve dining setting.

If you have been prescribed an epinephrine auto-injector, you should carry it at all times.

Your Resources

Williams College has a number of resources to help you navigate the allergy-friendly options on campus.

- Dietitians available through Dining Services and Student Health Services to provide information and help you manage your individual dietary needs.
- Online menus with full ingredient and nutritional information for all meals at each dining location are available at <http://dining.williams.edu/menus-nutrition/> . We use NetNutrition, an interactive tool for viewing menus, nutrient information, and to screen menus for allergens.
- Allergens listed on individual menu labels and online menus to indicate the presence of the nine (including sesame in 2023) most common food allergens. We also label for coconut, alcohol and pork ingredients.
- Access to gluten-free bread products and cereals, dairy/milk alternatives, individually packaged condiments upon request at all three of our main dining units.
- Food allergy trained on-site Dining Unit Manager available in every dining facility during operating hours for special dietary requests and to answer questions.
- Student Health Center for medical care and epinephrine auto-injector/medication prescription.
- Disability Support Services for students with health-related food consumption conditions. to help determine what accommodations are needed and to facilitate requests.

Important to Note

Williams College Dining Services uses manufacturer-provided ingredient information and we do not confirm the presence or absence of an allergen. We periodically review ingredients to verify ingredient labeling is consistent with what is provided by the manufacturer. However, be advised that ingredients listed may be subject to change without notification and that products prepared in our kitchen may have come in contact with common food allergens.

Please direct any questions regarding an allergy or food ingredients to any of the following individuals or the onsite Dining Unit Manager:

Temesgen Araya
Director of Dining Services
(413)597-2121
taa5@williams.edu

Jeanette Kopczynski
Associate Director of Dining Services
(413)597-3969
jkopczyn@williams.edu

Mark Thompson
Executive Chef of Dining Services
(413) 597-2050
mthomps2@williams.edu

Allyse Wiencek
Dining Services Nutritionist
(413) 597-6760
aw16@williams.edu

If you have any questions about the GET App, Board Plans or the online process for changing your Meal Plan, please contact dining@williams.edu or (413)597-2121.

Additional Information

The Top Nine: Peanuts, tree-nuts, milk, egg, fish, shellfish, wheat, soy and sesame account for 90% of severe food allergies. Allergic reactions are immune system responses to certain proteins in foods and symptoms can range from hives to anaphylaxis. Help us create an inclusive environment for students with food allergies by ensuring utensils are replaced to their designated containers on the buffet lines.

Celiac Disease: Celiac disease is a genetic autoimmune disease triggered by consuming a protein called gluten found in wheat, barley and rye. When people with celiac disease consume foods containing gluten, their immune system responds by damaging the finger-like villi of the small intestine. When the villi become damaged, the body is unable to absorb nutrients into the bloodstream, which can lead to malnourishment. A strict, 100% gluten-free diet is currently the only way to control celiac disease.

Non-Celiac Gluten Sensitivity: Some people experience symptoms seen with celiac disease when they have gluten in their diet, yet do not test positive for celiac disease. The terms non-celiac gluten sensitivity (NCGS) and non-celiac wheat sensitivity (NCWS) are generally used to refer to this condition, when removing gluten from the diet resolves symptoms.

Wheat Allergy: Wheat allergy is sometimes confused with celiac disease, but these conditions differ. A wheat allergy is an allergic reaction to foods containing wheat, specifically to proteins found in wheat. Exposure to wheat can trigger an allergic reaction that may result in a skin rash, itching, and swelling, trouble breathing, wheezing and other symptoms.

Milk Allergy: Milk allergy is an abnormal response by the body's immune system to milk and products containing milk. Cow's milk is the usual cause, but milk from sheep, goats, buffalo and other mammals also can cause a reaction.

Lactose Intolerance: Unlike a milk allergy, lactose intolerance doesn't involve the immune system. People who are lactose intolerant are lacking in the enzyme lactase, which breaks down lactose, a naturally occurring sugar found in milk and dairy products. While lactose intolerance can cause gastrointestinal discomfort, it is not life-threatening.

Other food allergies, intolerances and sensitivities: There are hundreds of foods outside of the top 9 that have elicited allergic responses in humans. In addition, many people experience food intolerances, which negatively affect the digestive system. FODMAPs, which are a collection of short-chain carbohydrates and sugar alcohols found in foods naturally or as additives are notorious for causing digestive distress. Low-FODMAP diets are often recommended for individuals who experience Irritable Bowel Syndrome.

To learn more about food allergies and allergic reactions, contact Food Allergy Education & Research at <https://www.foodallergy.org/>.

Campus Dining Locations

Driscoll Dining Hall

Driscoll Dining Hall offers full-service breakfast, lunch, and dinner highlighting unique, culinary creations with flavorful twists. The diverse menu showcases a wide selection of nutritious, healthy and local items. In addition to the regular menu, Driscoll offers an expansive salad bar complemented by innovative cultural theme meals throughout the year.

Mission Park Dining Hall

Mission Park offers full-service brunch on Sunday's as well as dinner weekly Sunday through Thursday. Their menu includes freshly-prepared food options with wholesome ingredients, many of which are prepared right on-site in their production kitchen. Join the Mission team for Meatless Mondays and versatile Build Your Own Grain Bowl options while you enjoy some of the best views of the Purple Mountains!

Whitman's' Dining Hall

As part of the Paresky Student Center, Whitman's offers full-service breakfast, lunch, dinner and a late-night program that includes a diverse, satisfying, plant rich menu. New in the fall of 2022, Whitmans is offering a Clean Cuisine station which is free from 8 of the top 9 food allergens (all but soy and coconut). This station contains recipes prepared by dedicated food allergy trained chefs in our dedicated kitchen which is free from 8 of the 9 top allergens (all but soy and coconut).

Lee Snack Bar **

For good eats, you can't beat Paresky Center's Lee Snack Bar. Here, you can enjoy fresh fruit, breakfast sandwiches, hot or cold sandwiches or burgers.

'82 Grill **

Located beneath the Lee Snack Bar in Paresky Center, the '82 Grill offers homemade pizza cooked up fresh in a Woodstone oven, delicious pasta bowls, wings, quesadillas and amazing toasted grinders!

Fresh & Go

Located in the lower level of Paresky, Fresh & Go features Williams' famous specialty sandwiches, grain bowls and salads. A healthy and convenient alternative to the traditional student dining halls, bagged lunches include fresh fruit, beverage and snack.

Eco Café

Eco Café offers organic fair-trade coffee, organic teas, and local baked goods in the atrium of the Science Center. Now serving Fresh & Go options as well.

**Most items are prepared on shared equipment with top allergens such as wheat, dairy, egg, soy, sesame, fish and shellfish.

Conveniently order from '82 Grill, Lee Snack Bar, Fresh & Go or Eco Cafe through the [GET App](#)

Food Allergy Disclaimer

Williams College Dining Services makes every effort to identify ingredients that may cause allergic reactions for those individuals with food allergies. Our food production staff receives training on the identification of potential allergens and on the severity of food allergies. Because of the number of meals served and the number of items used each day, along with food product changes from our food vendors, it cannot be guaranteed that every allergen in the food served will be identified and labeled. There's also a possibility that manufacturers of the commercial foods we use could change the formulation at any time, without notice. Students and other users of Dining Service facilities concerned with food allergies must be aware of these risks. Williams College Dining Services cannot assume any liability for adverse reactions to food consumed or items one may come in contact with while eating at any college dining facility or catered event. People with food allergies who may need to use an epinephrine auto-injector should carry one at all times. College dining staff are NOT trained to administer epinephrine auto-injectors and CANNOT provide or administer them.