

Keep epi pens handy in the air

By ACSH Staff — March 20, 2013

For those with severe peanut or tree nut allergies, flying may provoke anxiety. Given that Air Canada is the only airline with any sort of formal policy on peanut and tree nut allergies, a [new study](#) ^[1] published in the *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology-In Practice* may give those with these allergies some relief.

The study involved surveying over 3,000 individuals from 11 countries. Of those individuals, 349 had an allergic reaction during a flight. But researchers found that taking certain actions lowered the odds of reporting a reaction. These included requesting any accommodation, requesting a peanut/tree nut-free meal, wiping tray table with commercial wipe, avoiding use of airline pillows and blankets and requesting that other passengers not consume peanut/tree nut-containing products.

The study also found that epinephrine was underused during flights, a surprising fact since 98 percent of passengers reported having a personal source of epinephrine available. And flight crews were notified of reactions only half of the time.

Dr. Matthew Greenhawt of the University of Michigan s Food Allergy Center and C.S. Mott Children s Hospital says that these findings provide a starting point for airlines to consider in terms of their own policies, where they could work with passengers to mitigate risk.

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