

## Understanding labels

## For further information:

### Label A

> **Ingredients:** cheese, wheat flour, cream, yoghurt, butter, lactose, whey...

The allergens are clearly indicated

### Label B

> **Ingredients:** wheat flour, barley malt, egg white; butyric fat (milk), emulsifier: soya lecithin...

One allergen, butyric fat, is not clearly indicated. Its origin must therefore be specified (milk).

## What do you do if you have an allergy?

**If you suspect you have a food allergy, contact your doctor or the allergy department of the hospital closest to your home.**

**Allergies may provoke a range of disorders, some of which may be serious**

- > DGCCRF Internet site  
[www.dgccrf.minefi.gouv.fr](http://www.dgccrf.minefi.gouv.fr)
- > **3939 « Allô, Service Public »** (0.12 € per minute)  
Consumer information service
- > The Directorate for Competition, Consumer Affairs and Fraud Control (Direction de la Concurrence, de la Consommation et de la Répression des Fraudes) in the département
- > The French National Consumer Institute (Institut national de la consommation):  
[www.conso.net](http://www.conso.net)
- > Any consumer associations in the département

*This leaflet is provided for information only.*

*It is inevitably not exhaustive and does not replace the applicable regulations.*

**dgccrf**

Direction générale de la Concurrence, de la Consommation  
et de la Répression des Fraudes

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## Food allergens



**Do you suffer from a food allergy or intolerance?**

**You should be careful about the food you eat.**

**Any product containing allergens must be labelled.**

## How can you recognise them?



## What are allergens?

**The list of the most common allergens is set under Community legislation and periodically revised. It is currently as follows:**

- > Cereals containing gluten (wheat, rye, barley, oats, spelt, Kamut or their hybrid strains) and products made from these cereals
- > Eggs and egg-based products
- > Fish and fish-based products
- > Milk and milk-based products
- > Nuts (almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, cashew nuts, pecan nuts, brazil nuts, macadamia nuts, Queensland nuts, pistachios) and products made from these nuts
- > Sulphur dioxide and sulphites in concentrations above 10 mg/kg or 10 mg/l (expressed as SO<sub>2</sub>)
- > Peanuts and peanut-based products
- > Shellfish and shellfish-based products
- > Soya and soya-based products
- > Celery and celery-based products
- > Mustard and mustard-based products
- > Sesame seeds and sesame seed-based products

## Allergen labelling

Allergens may be used in manufacturing food products. Even in very small quantities, they must be indicated on the label. Simply by reading it you must be able to see that these allergens are present.

### How are they indicated?

- > they must be mentioned, whatever the quantity of allergens used or present in the finished product;
- > their name must not be coded: for example, “soya lecithin” and not “E322”;
- > if the name of the item of food clearly refers to the presence of an allergen, it is not obligatory to include it in the list of ingredients: for example “cheese”, “butter” and “cream”, which are milk-based products.

## Unintentional presence of allergens

It is not impossible for allergens to be in a product unintentionally. It may be due to contamination through contact with other products during manufacture, storage or transport.

Food product manufacturers should evaluate the possible risks of contamination and do everything possible to reduce them.

In order to give you as much information as possible, some precautionary labels may include a standard warning such as “**may contain traces of...**” or “**may contain...**” (peut contenir des traces de... ou susceptible de contenir...).