

Comparing Airlines

Allergic Living's handy chart on the allergy policies of 13 major air carriers.

Updated as of June 2015

AIR CANADA

Ticket Buying

- With at least 48 hours' notice, a person with peanut or tree nut allergies can request a "buffer zone" while booking through Air Canada Reservations. A medical clearance form is not required.
- Air Canada will do its best to accommodate, even if less than 48 hours' notice is given.

In-flight Accommodation

- The airline does not make general announcements that there is an allergic passenger on board.
- If you formally requested a buffer zone, passengers in it will be told "they cannot" consume peanut/nut products. Attendants will also not offer any food cart items containing nuts. In business class, the buffer area is the one bank of seats in which the

allergic passenger is seated. In economy, it is the passenger's row, plus the row ahead and the one immediately behind, plus the passenger's row of seats.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nut/Sesame

- Free snacks in business class include nuts.
- On international, long-haul flights, nuts are warmed for business class.
- No peanut-free meal is offered on flights that serve meals. Air Canada cannot stop other customers from bringing allergens on board.

Sold Snack Policy

- Airline does not serve peanuts.
- It does serve nuts, including cashews and almonds, as well as snacks that contain nuts

and/or sesame. Ingredient information for all snacks is available on Air Canada's website.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Gluten-free meals are available on international flights. (But the airline cannot "guarantee" the gluten-free status; a catering company provides the meals).
- Gluten-free options are available among sold snack items.
- No shellfish is served.
- Airline does serve fish on international flights, and as an entrée in executive class. You can order an alternate meal in advance, but *Allergic Living* recommends bringing your own food.

Pets, Perfume

- A maximum of 4 cats or small dogs are allowed in the cabin, provided the pet's carrier fits

under the seat in front.

- Passengers who are severely allergic to cats or dogs can, with medical approval, request buffer zone accommodation. However, a 2015 court ruling found Air Canada does not have to provide the zones for dog allergy, as had previously been required by the airline regulator. For cat allergy, depending on the aircraft, the accommodation will either be a buffer zone or a 'pet-free' flight.

- To receive accommodation, one must give 48 hours' notice.
- There is no policy on perfume.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- Crews all trained in first aid, including how to recognize and deal with allergic reactions.
- Medical kit includes epineph-

rine (vial and syringe) and an inhaler for asthma.

Emergency Protocol

- In a medical emergency, the crew contacts Stat MedEvac, a medical response center.
- Crew will also ask over the P.A. if medical personnel are on board. A qualified person will then consult with Stat MedEvac staff.

Notes

From Air Canada's allergy policy: "If you are allergic or sensitive to products that may be found in an aircraft cabin, it is your responsibility to carry the proper medication and other protection."

Web Link: www.aircanada.com
Search: food allergies or allergies
To request a buffer zone, call: 1-800-667-4732

AIR FRANCE

Ticket Buying

- On flights longer than 2½ hours, you may request an "allergen-free meal" This cold meal, pre-packaged by the airline in France, is free of cereals, shellfish, fish, peanuts, almonds, walnuts, hazelnuts, soy, milk, eggs, celery, mustard, sesame seeds, lupine and mollusks. It has to be requested at the time of ticket purchase, at least 48 hours prior to the flight.

In-flight Accommodation

- Announcements will not be made that there is an allergic passenger or passengers on board.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nuts/Sesame

- Peanuts, tree nuts, peanut or nut snacks are seldom handed out, but may be on some flights.
- Several snacks with sesame.
- All packaged foods are labeled.

Sold Snack Policy

Meals and snacks are provided free of charge.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Gluten-free meals can be ordered at the time of reservation, and up to 48 hours before a flight.
- Fish is served. In economy, there are two choices of meals. (*Allergic Living* recommends

allergic travelers carry on their own food.) Airline will not refrain from serving fish to others for an allergic passenger.

Pets, Perfume

- Cats and dogs under five kilograms are allowed, in carriers. The media representative says if an allergic person is on a flight with a cat, they will be moved far away from each other.
- There is no fragrance policy.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- Cabin crews are trained in first aid, including how to deal with allergic reactions. Each crew member has a safety and rescue manual, with procedures to

follow in case of allergic reactions or asthma attacks.

- Crews receive annual refresher training on first-aid skills, including a review of the in-flight medical kit and CPR.
- Medical kit includes epinephrine (vial and syringe) and a terbutaline inhaler for asthma.

Emergency Protocol

- In a medical emergency, crew will ask if there is a doctor on the flight. The medical kit is opened in the presence of a doctor.

- Air France aircraft can communicate with SAMU, the medical emergency service in Paris. If there is no doctor on board,

SAMU physicians instruct the crew on how to administer medication.

- All crew are safety and rescue certified, and receive training on using semi-automatic defibrillators, available on all Air France airplanes.
- An emergency landing would be the captain's decision, after consulting SAMU.

Notes

The media representative says that when it comes to medical emergencies, Air France "is equipped beyond what is required by European regulations."

Web Link: www.airfrance.us
Search: allergies

AMERICAN AIRLINES

Ticket Buying

- It's recommended to call reservations to ask that a note be inserted into the passenger record about the peanut or nut allergy, or to ask for the special assistance center to make that request.

- When a reservation notes a customer with a food allergy, the special assistance coordinator will contact the customer.

In-flight Accommodation

- American's flight attendants do not make PA announcements that passengers with food allergies are on a flight.
- While American does not serve

peanuts, other customers may bring peanuts on board. The crew will not ask fellow passengers to refrain from eating foods such as peanuts or tree nuts.

- There is no 'buffer zone' policy for food or pet allergies, and the airline does not allow pre-boarding to wipe down seats.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nuts

- No free snacks with peanuts are served in economy. Warmed nuts are served in first class.

Sold Snack Policy

- The airline does not sell peanut snacks. It does offer snacks with nuts including

cashews, and some sandwich wraps have sesame.

- The airline does not refrain from offering tree nut snacks because of an allergic customer.
- No meal contains peanut as an ingredient, but there may be trace amounts of nut or peanut in meals and snacks.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Gluten-free meals are available if pre-ordered. Special meals are produced at a dedicated work station in the flight kitchens; employees and caterers are trained in food cross-contact prevention.

(*Allergic Living* recommends allergic individuals bring their own meals for safety during air travel.)

Pets, Perfume

- Cats and dogs are allowed in the cabin in carriers.
- A person with animal allergies can request a change of seat.
- No policy on fragrance, but someone with scent sensitivity can ask to be moved.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- The flight crew is trained in first aid, which includes some training on allergic reactions.
- Medical kit on board includes

an albuterol inhaler and syringes of epinephrine.

Emergency Protocol

- Allergic passengers should carry on medications. Medication with a needle must have "a professionally printed label identifying the medication or a manufacturer's name or pharmaceutical label."
- Airline's emergency protocol was not provided.

Notes

Says AA's website: "We cannot guarantee customers will not be exposed to peanuts or other tree nuts during flight."

Web Link: www.aa.com
Search: peanut allergy

Allergic Living's Comparing Airlines Chart

BRITISH AIRWAYS

Ticket Buying

- It's best to inform the airline of an allergic condition at the time of booking. If passengers have any concerns about flying, they are asked to speak to the passenger medical clearance unit.

In-flight Accommodation

- Announcements are not made that there is an allergic passenger or passengers on board.

- The airline will not ask fellow passengers to refrain from eating nuts, peanuts or sesame.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nuts

- The airline does not serve peanuts.
- Peanuts are not served as

snacks. Nuts and sesame "generally" are not either, but there is no means of checking about a specific flight in advance.

- Nuts such as cashews and macadamias may be served in first class.

- In-flight meals do not contain peanuts or peanut products as intended ingredients. However, the airline cannot guarantee meals and snacks are completely peanut-free as they may be produced at a facility that handles peanuts.

Sold Snack Policy

- No sold snacks.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Gluten-free meal options

are available.

- BA does serve fish and shellfish, but generally at least one seafood-free meal is offered.

- The airline does not refrain from serving a particular food on a flight to accommodate an allergic person. While passengers can order an alternate meal in advance, *Allergic Living* recommends always bringing your own food as a precaution.

Pets, Perfume

- Pets are not allowed in the cabin, with the exception of guide/assistance dogs.
- There is no policy on scents.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- The in-flight medical kit

contains epinephrine (auto-injector) and a reliever inhaler for asthma.

- The flight crew is trained in first aid, and how to deal with allergy-related emergencies.

- Flight attendants are allowed to administer medication "under certain circumstances," says spokesperson Cathy West.

Emergency Protocol

- Cabin crew is trained in advanced first aid and will call upon medical professionals on board if needed.

- If a reaction is serious, British Airways will contact MedLink, the global medical emergency advisory service.

- Diversion of a flight will be considered from the start of

any assessment of a medical condition.

Notes

"British Airways are unable to heat or cold store any food items you might bring with you, so if you do prefer to consume your own food, non-perishable food is best. You should also check the different quarantine laws of your transit and/or destination with respect to food types permitted into the country," notes the British Airways website.

Web Link

www.britishairways.com
Search: food allergies

CATHAY PACIFIC

Ticket Buying

- Airline wants allergic passengers to notify them as soon as possible "so we can be best prepared to accommodate them," according to Cathay spokesperson Jennifer Pearson.

In-flight Accommodation

- The airline does not make an announcement about an allergic passenger on board.

- Cathay will try to move an allergic passenger away from someone eating peanuts or nuts.

- From its website: "Cathay Pacific Airways cannot under any circumstances guarantee

a peanut-free environment to passengers either in our aircraft cabins or airport lounges. If you require a peanut-free environment, Cathay Pacific Airways cannot provide this."

- Passengers who require a peanut-free meal are encouraged to bring onboard their own food which doesn't require refrigeration.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nut/Sesame

- If a request is submitted 72 hours prior to departure time, Cathay will provide peanut-free snacks for everyone within the same seating class. Otherwise, peanuts, nuts and sesame may

be served in snacks or meals.

- It is also recommended to complete a medical form available from their website.

Sold Snack Policy

- All snacks on Cathay are free.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Cathay offers gluten-free ("not suitable for gluten allergies") and lactose-free ("not suitable for cow's milk allergies") meal options.

- The airline serves fish and shellfish, and will not change the menu on a given flight for an allergic passenger. Says the representative, "We'll do our best to seat the allergic passenger away from those who

are eating fish."

Pets, Perfume

- Certain pets are allowed.
- No policy on perfume or cologne.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- Cathay cabin crews are first aid trained for "incapacitation in general."

- Epinephrine is in the medical kit, including an auto-injector.

Emergency Protocol

- In a medical emergency, Cathay has an arrangement with MedLink which provides 24-hour "tele-medicine" service. The physicians there would offer advice on whether diversion of an plane is required.

Notes

Spokesperson Pearson adds: "Cathay Pacific is sensitive to the special needs of our passengers but cannot guarantee an entirely peanut-free environment. Passengers may bring their own peanuts on board or residual peanut products may be left in aisles, common areas or on seats from one flight to the next."

Web Link

www.cathaypacific.com
Search: allergies

DELTA AIRLINES

Ticket-Buying

- Delta likes to learn about a food allergy as early as possible – preferably at the time of the ticket purchase. If booking online, note "allergies" in the 'special service or requirement' box. It's recommended to contact Delta Reservations to make sure the allergy is noted on the passenger's record.

In-flight Accommodation

- The airline wants you to notify the gate agent of an allergy during check-in before boarding, so the agent can alert the flight crew.

- Peanuts or products containing peanuts will not be served on a flight when a passenger reports a peanut allergy to Delta Reservations and the

gate agent at the airport. (The policy applies only to peanuts.)

An announcement will be made to let other passengers know that peanut products will not be served.

- While it is not policy, the crew may (when notified) offer to create a three-row buffer zone in which passengers are asked not to eat tree nuts and nut products are not served.

- Customers with allergies may be allowed to pre-board in order to wipe down seats and trays.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nuts

- Snacks offered (unless allergy notice is given) include peanut-butter cookies and peanuts.

- Tree nuts are served in first

class; sesame snacks are not served.

Sold Snack Policy

- Plain and Peanut M&M's are sold in both first class and economy, but crew will refrain from selling such snacks with a peanut-allergic person is identified as being onboard. A nut and fruit mix snack is available to purchase.

Gluten-free,

Other Allergens

- Gluten-free meals may be ordered in advance on international flights.

- Shellfish isn't served; salmon is offered on international flights.

Pets, Perfume

- An owner is allowed to bring a dog, cat or household bird into the cabin, provided the

animal is in a carrier that fits under the seat. If someone has a pet allergy, a buffer zone of two rows may be created for the allergic customer.

- Similarly, crews may set up a buffer zone for those with fragrance sensitivity.

Allergy/Asthma

Training

- Crew has first-aid training, including how to recognize and medicate allergic reactions.

- The in-flight medical kit contains an epinephrine auto-injector.

Emergency Protocol

- In an allergy emergency, the policy is that flight attendants: tend to the individual; use the auto-injector if required. If the reaction escalates, the crew

will radio the emergency medical assistance provider on the ground for advice.

- When a passenger appears to be in medical danger, an emergency landing is considered.

Notes

Delta's peanut allergy policy states: "We'll do everything we can, but unfortunately we still can't guarantee that the flight will be completely peanut-free."

Web Link

www.delta.com
Search: special travel needs

Allergic Living's Comparing Airlines Chart

JETBLUE

Ticket-Buying

- It's best to inform the airline of an allergy at booking. Upon boarding, the head of the in-flight crew should be informed of a peanut or nut allergy.

In-flight Accommodation

- No peanuts are served. However, it's possible snacks or surfaces may contain traces of peanut. Some snacks contain tree nuts.
- Upon request, a buffer zone can be created for a peanut or nut allergy. This consists of the row where the allergic person is seated, plus one row ahead and one behind. A crew member will ask those within the buffer zone to refrain from eating products with nuts (without identifying the aller-

gic passenger). The attendant will not serve any foods containing nuts in these rows.

- You can request "silent boarding" at the gate, to board early for the purpose of wiping down your seats.
- While JetBlue's official policy is that it does not make on-board announcements about nut or peanut allergies, flight crew may choose to make an announcement at their own discretion.
- Planes are cleaned using non-latex products.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nut

- While the airline does not offer peanuts, some food items served come from facilities that may process other

foods with peanut.

- Free snacks currently include potato chips, pretzels and nut-free cookies.

Sold Snack Policy

- Tree nut-containing items may be served. Current snack boxes include one with fruit-almond bars and cashews.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Gluten-free products can be purchased at Cibo Express Gourmet Market at New York's JFK International, the airline's main base.
- The airline's "Eat Up" boxes include a gluten-free snack box with GF multigrain crackers, hummus, olives, etc.
- Some flights have "Café" meals. Ingredients are on the

website, but allergy protocols can't be guaranteed.

Pets, Perfume

- Small dogs and cats are accepted on flights. The maximum is four pets per flight.
- While there is no policy on fragrance, a passenger with a fragrance allergy can be reseated, if possible.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- All JetBlue flight crews are trained in CPR, first aid and the use of defibrillators.
- The medical kit contains an epinephrine auto-injector.

Emergency Protocol

- If an allergic reaction is not abating, flight attendants communicate with the captain and MedAire Inc., the emergency medical service

provider. Through MedAire, they have a direct voice link to a physician, who offers guidance.

- The captain would decide whether an emergency landing was required.

Notes

"We encourage customers who have a food allergy to please make arrangements to the best of his/her abilities to be prepared in case of an allergic reaction or emergency during their flight," advises the JetBlue website.

Web Link

www.jetblue.com
Search: food allergies

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

Ticket-Buying

- Customers with peanut dust allergies who make reservations over the phone are asked to notify customer representatives of the allergy at the time the reservation is made. If a reservation is made through a travel agent, phone 800-1-FLY-SWA afterward to speak with a customer representative.

For online reservations, advise the airline of the allergy on the "Payment and Passenger Information" screen by clicking the link to "Add/Edit Disability Options".

In-flight Accommodation

- Peanut-allergic passengers are told to arrive at the gate one hour early and identify themselves to an agent who will fill out a "peanut dust allergy" form. The customer gives the form to a flight attendant upon boarding.

- The service of packaged peanuts will be suspended for that flight.
- If the customer has a connection, he or she will be given two documents, one of which is kept to present to an attendant on the connecting flight.
- The agent will notify the flight attendants on the connecting flight that they cannot serve packaged peanuts until the allergic customer disembarks.
- Southwest can't prevent others from bringing peanuts or peanut products on board.
- Peanut residue, dust or oil may be present on the aircraft from earlier flights.
- The gate agent will decide whether to allow a customer to pre-board to wipe down seats and table trays.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nuts

- On shorter flights, the usual

snacks (when no allergy has been declared) are peanuts or pretzels. Allergic passengers are encouraged to bring their own snacks.

- On flights over 1,271 miles, there are three snack choices (meals and sandwiches are not served).

- On flights over 1,521 miles, there are three snack choices (meals and sandwiches are not served).

- Snack selections change every six months.

Sold Snack Policy

Southwest does not charge for snacks.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

Southwest does not serve gluten-free snacks.

Pets, Perfume

- Southwest accepts small cats and dogs in carriers and cannot guarantee that a flight will or

will not have animals on board the aircraft. However, the airline suggests arriving early and checking with the customer service agent at the gate. If there is an animal on that flight, employees will do their best to accommodate the passenger with allergies.

- The airline "does not guarantee" a flight will be free of perfume or cleaning scents.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- Flight attendants receive first aid and CPR training and are taught to recognize the allergy symptoms.

- The medical kit includes epinephrine (in a vial).

- Crew members are not allowed to administer medication. A doctor or medical professional on board would decide whether to administer medication when assisting an

ailing passenger.

Emergency Protocol

- During a medical emergency, flight attendants notify the pilot who requests a radio patch to the medical consultant on the ground. The flight attendants page for medical personnel onboard.

- Based on a passenger's symptoms, Southwest's medical consultant will advise the pilots on whether an emergency landing is needed.

Notes

Customers with peanut dust allergies are advised to book travel on early flights as aircraft are thoroughly cleaned at the end of the day.

Web Link

www.southwest.com
Search: peanut dust allergy

SWISS INTERNATIONAL

Ticket-Buying

- When booking, allergy information can be added to a customer's profile online or by calling the service center.

- Customers with allergies are encouraged to notify the cabin crew and the service center.

In-flight Accommodation

- No peanuts are served, and passengers are asked not to bring any foods containing peanuts on board.

- However, it's possible meals and snacks will contain trace amounts of peanuts or nuts.

- Meals can be provided for allergies if the service center is contacted at least 8 days prior to departure. However, *Allergic Living* recommends that those with allergies bring their food as a precaution.
- P.A. announcements are not made for an allergy.
- Buffer zones are not offered, but crews will do their best to accommodate when possible.
- This airline was certified allergy-friendly (for environmental allergies). Synthetic pillows can be requested and

lavatories feature hypoallergenic soaps.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nuts

- No peanuts served, but snacks or meals may contain nuts or sesame, or traces of peanuts.

- Allergens are declared on pre-packaged items whenever possible.

Sold Snack Policy

- No snacks are sold onboard.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Gluten-free meals and rolls are available.

- Passengers with an allergy can request a special meal.

Pets, Perfume

- Pets are allowed on board in carriers, but a special filtration system pulls all allergens downward while fresh air is filtered in from above.

- No official policy on fragrances.

- The crew will do their best to accommodate requests related to pet or perfume allergies.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- All cabin crew members

receive medical training which includes training on how to respond to anaphylaxis emergencies.

Emergency Protocol

- No information was provided.

Notes

"By becoming an allergy-friendly airline, SWISS meets the growing needs and trends in this field," says Frank Maier, SWISS Vice President of Product & Services.

Web Link

www.swiss.com/ch/en
Search: allergy policy

Allergic Living's Comparing Airlines Chart

UNITED AIRLINES

Ticket-Buying

- The airline would like to be informed of a food allergy at the time of booking.

In-flight Accommodation

- With peanut allergy, if you inform the flight attendant, "in some cases" he or she will ask others seated near you to refrain from opening or eating peanut products.
- The gate agent may allow pre-boarding to wipe seats.
- Flight crews do not make announcements that there

is an allergic passenger on board.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nuts

- United does not serve peanuts or foods made with peanut oil.
- Snack mixes contain tree nuts; some sesame snacks. Warmed cashews and almonds may be served in first class.

Sold Snack Policy

- Products that contain tree nuts and sesame are for sale

on the snack cart.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Gluten-intolerant meals are available. They do not contain wheat, barley, rye or oats.
- Shellfish and fish can be served as an option in first class or in both classes on international flights. The airline does not change a flight menu for an allergic person.

Pets, Perfume

- Small dogs (except some breeds), cats and domestic

birds in carriers are allowed.

- A buffer zone may be created for a person with serious pet allergies.
- No perfume policy.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- The crew is trained in first aid, and has instruction on allergies and use of allergy medications.
- The medical kit includes an epinephrine auto-injector.

Emergency Protocol

- The airline did not provide information.

Notes

United's site says: "We cannot guarantee a nut-free environment. When making your travel arrangements, we recommend that you assess the extent of any allergies or other medical conditions to determine if air travel is the right choice for you."

Web Link

www.united.com
Search: peanut allergy or special meals

US AIRWAYS

Ticket-Buying

- The company did not provide information on this, but *Allergic Living* recommends that you inform the reservation agent of your allergy at the time of booking.

In-flight Accommodation

- While they cannot guarantee an allergy-free flight, peanuts are not served.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nut/Sesame

- US Airways does not offer free snacks in economy.

Sold Snack Policy

- Snacks, some of which contain tree nuts, are available

for purchase on flights over an hour in duration.

- The airline encourages passengers with severe allergies to bring their own snack and meal items onboard.

- The airline offers special meal requests for Trans-Atlantic flights, which must be ordered 24 hours in advance of flight.

(However, for food allergies, *Allergic Living* always recommends that passengers bring their own food for safety.)

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- Special meal options are available and must be ordered 24 hours in advance.

Pets, Perfumes

- Some pets are allowed in the cabin including small dogs, cats or birds. Pets must remain inside their carriers under the seat. Service animals are allowed on all flights.

- The airline will change seats to accommodate a passenger with perfume sensitivity, if possible.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- All US Airways inflight crew members receive comprehensive first aid training that includes training on allergic reactions.

- Epinephrine (as an auto-injector) is carried in the medical kit.

Emergency Protocol

- Flight attendants will page for a doctor on-board and notify MedLink, the on-the-ground medical service, of an occurrence.
- Crew members will then

assess the passenger and assist, as directed by MedLink and/or the medical professional identified on board.

Notes

US Airways has merged with American Airlines and both websites now say: "We cannot guarantee customers will not be exposed to peanuts or other tree nuts during flight."

Web Link

www.usairways.com
Search: special meals

VIRGIN AMERICA

Ticket-Buying

- Guests are asked to advise the customer care team about a severe allergy. Contacts are: 650-762-7082 or vxcareteam@virginamerica.com.

In-flight Accommodation

- If requested, the crew will make an announcement alerting other passengers to a serious nut or peanut allergy, and will request that passengers refrain from opening packages that contain nuts, or eating items that contain nuts.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nut/Sesame

- Virgin America's website says peanuts are not served

on flights, but other nuts may be served.

Sold Snack Policy

- Sold snacks on Virgin America include cookies, caramel popcorn, a hearty meal (salami, crackers, cheese, pretzels, fruit and salted chickpeas) and turkey jerky. These items do not have nuts as ingredients, but some are processed in the same facility as nuts, so always read the package carefully.

- On flights over two hours, peanut butter and jam sandwiches are among meal options. (We are awaiting

information on whether they these are served if an allergic person is on board.) The turkey sandwich also contains nuts.

- Depending on the destination, first class service can include: warm mixed nuts, brownies with pecans and oatmeal with almonds.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- For gluten-free fliers, the airline has a platter with a variety of cheeses, grapes, dried apple and apricots, and gluten-free crackers.

- Depending on the destination, salmon, ginger soy

chicken and shrimp may be served in first class.

Pets, Perfumes

- For pet allergies, you are encouraged to alert the customer care team.

- The airline allows small dogs and cats in carriers in economy, but not in first class due to limited space under seats.

- We are awaiting information on perfume allergy from the airline.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- All aircraft are equipped with emergency medical kits. In-flight crew are

trained in first aid.

Emergency Protocol

- If assistance is needed, flight attendants will contact the MedLink service, and receive guidance from a physician.

Notes

"Our guests, including those with severe allergies, are an important focus for Virgin America."

Web Link

www.virginamerica.com. Note that Virgin operates three airlines around the globe, and policies can vary among them.

Allergic Living's Comparing Airlines Chart

WESTJET

Ticket-Buying

Notify WestJet as soon as possible of a food allergy and the Canadian airline will add a special code to your reservation. If you book through a travel agent, be sure you notify the agent of the allergy. On the day of the flight, passengers should notify the check-in agent and flight attendant of the allergy.

In-Flight Accommodation

- WestJet is very allergy-aware. With the advance notification, flight crew will make a P.A. announcement for anyone who self-identifies as being allergic to peanut or nuts (and requests the announcement).
- Passengers who inform the flight crew of their nut allergy will be asked if they have an epinephrine auto-injector with

them and where it is, or if they're carrying any other allergy medications.

- Passengers within three rows will be informed that a passenger has a severe allergy and will be asked to refrain from opening or eating peanuts, nuts or nut products during the flight. It is important to note that the airline cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment.

Free Snack Policy on Peanut/Nut/Sesame

- WestJet does not serve any snacks that contain peanuts or nuts. Some snacks may contain sesame or traces of peanuts or nuts.
- WestJet requires food vendors to complete a checklist that indicates all allergens at a facility, and have an allergen control policy that ensures

against cross-contamination with peanuts or nuts.

Solid Snack Policy

- No snack with peanuts or nuts as a main ingredient, but some may contain sesame.

Gluten-free, Other Allergens

- WestJet does not serve full meals, but there are a few gluten-free snack options.
- At present, WestJet does not serve fish or shellfish, but might in future.

Pets, Perfume

- Small pets, including dogs, birds, cats and rabbits, are allowed in the cabin in authorized carriers. A maximum of four pets in the cabin per flight are allowed.
- With 48 hours' notice, WestJet will create a buffer zone of five rows for a cat-allergic passenger. Without 48

hours' notice, the airline will still do its best to accommodate.

- If a customer cannot be on a flight with a pet, that person or the pet owner will be moved to a different flight at no extra charge.
- No policy on scents, but flight crew will relocate a scent-sensitive passenger.

Allergy/Asthma Training

- The medical kit includes epinephrine (vial), asthma medication and antihistamines.
- Flight attendants may administer a passenger's auto-injector provided it's prescribed to that particular passenger.
- Regulators require flight crews to update first-aid skills every three years, but WestJet attendants take a refresher course annually.

Emergency Protocol

- Flight crew will contact on-the-ground medical professionals through MedLink.
- Should MedLink advise a diversion, the captain will make the final decision.

Notes

"While our food items do not contain nuts or peanuts, some of WestJet's on board snacks may contain traces of nuts or peanuts, and we recommend that guests with severe allergies to nuts or peanuts bring their own food items," advises WestJet's website.

Web Link:

www.westjet.com
Search: allergies

By Jennifer Van Evra, Patrick Bennett and Amy Wicker