

An Everyday Danger

A lot of people think that they should be able to give their kids whatever foods they want and send them off to school. What they don't know is that they might be putting an allergic child's life at risk.

Before you watch

Match the words with the definitions.

terminal	hint, indication
clue	to lose something as you get older
to outgrow	leading to death, fatal
hygiene	to put a medicine in someone's body using a needle
injection	to deal with (a problem)
to cope	cleanliness

Transcript

It is not a terminal illness that my child has, but it is an every day, every second, every moment risk. The unknown of every day he could possibly die, and we have no clue when it's going to happen sometimes. But it uses energy and then puts him in the wires.

But if we're prepared, we're continuing on his life. Xavier is allergic to peanuts, seafood, all tree nuts, shellfish, kiwis, cucumbers, sesame, peas, chickpeas, lentils, lima beans. He used to be allergic to eggs, which he outgrew.

Is there anything else that I'm missing? And coconut. It's ever changing, and that's the guessing game that I don't like. Some people don't believe that food allergies are real at all.

A lot of people think that they should be able to give their kids whatever foods they want and send them off to school with as much peanut butter, as much tree nuts. What they don't understand is they're putting a child's life at risk. He could be on a playground and somebody could have peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

He'd go in the same monkey bars, and then he could go ahead and, like, pick his nose or wipe his lip, and he could have a reaction. This is why being in school is so crazy too, because they're using the same keyboards, they're opening the same books. It's the unknown that's really scary.

Where is my book bag? Up here. Open up. Open big.
Open up. Open big. Open.

One time. One time. There are a lot of theories on why allergy has been increasing, and probably many of them have contributed.

The most popular one that's out there is called the hygiene theory, and the hygiene theory says that we live in too clean an environment, and that if you're not exposed enough in the way of germs or bacteria or infections early in life, your immune system will not be kept busy and will focus on things like allergy. So there's all these theories of why, and that's what I used to focus on. Why is this happening? I also felt like, what did I do during my pregnancy that increased his chances of having food allergies? So there's a lot of mom guilt too.

But now I'm just like, oh, we just have to deal with it, because there's no solving it just yet. You have to plan for your food allergy every day, every meal, every snack, about what the ingredients of that food are. The second big piece of it that runs your life is you have to be ready for that accidental exposure, that accidental reaction.

And one of the real scary things, you never know what the next reaction will look like. He ate half a cashew, and immediately, within five minutes, my son was turning blue. But he has to know how to stand up for himself, keep himself safe.

So it's a combination of physical and emotional stuff we go through on a regular basis, so he is prepared. No allergy to oats, nuts, seafood, sesame. Three, two, one. Injection complete. And then just put it back in the case. Call 911.

All of those things that any young, beautiful child, adolescent, teenager, adult wants to do when he has his first kiss, wanting to travel the world, go to college and become an independent person, all of those things for him are going to come with some sense of responsibility for food allergies. But if we raise a child who's confident and happy with himself, hopefully he'll be just fine with coping.

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After you watch

Try to inform a friend about this topic using three new words that you have learned from the video. Also, remember you can read the transcript at any time.

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