

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY STUFFED WITH ALLERGY, ASTHMA TRIGGERS *Tips for a Misery-Free Turkey Day*

Thanksgiving is about family, food and travel. And for the millions of Americans with allergies or asthma, it's about navigating a minefield of triggers, from the pumpkin pie to the dusty guest bedroom.

“A number of holiday-related triggers can make people sneeze, wheeze or, in the case of food allergies, have a more serious reaction,” said Dr. Daniel Reichmuth and Dr. Sami Nallamshetty of Florida Medical Clinic Dept. of Allergy, both board-certified allergists. “But by planning ahead, the day can be misery-free.”

Dr. Reichmuth and Dr. Nallamshetty, specialists in diagnosing and treating allergies and asthma, and the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI) have several suggestions to help those with food allergies, environmental allergies or asthma avoid unnecessary suffering.

For guests with food allergies, the holiday feast often includes common [food allergens](#) such as wheat, soy, dairy and nuts:

- **Talking turkey** – The centerpiece of the Thanksgiving meal may seem safe, but self-basting turkeys can include soy, wheat and dairy. A natural turkey is your best bet since by law it must contain nothing but turkey and water. Also, be sure the stuffing is made from wheat-free bread.
- **On the side** – For allergen-free mashed potatoes, swap the milk and butter for chicken broth and margarine. Use corn starch to thicken the gravy instead of wheat flour. And forget about topping the green bean casserole with slivered almonds.
- **Now for dessert** – Even though pumpkin allergies are rare, America's favorite Thanksgiving pie can cause problems. Be sure to offer alternative desserts. To be on the safe side, suggest guests with serious food allergies bring their own sweet treats.

Watch out for environmental triggers, as well:

- **Wash-up woes** – Aunt Sophie's fancy guest soap may contain fragrance that can cause allergic contact dermatitis. Use the regular soap or bring your own.
- **Problem pets** – If you're allergic to furry animals, asking grandma to lock her cat in the basement during your visit will do little if anything to ease your misery. That's because pet dander gets everywhere and is difficult to eradicate. However, you can help yourself by taking symptom-easing medications prior to your visit. An allergist can recommend treatments for your pet allergy, such as antihistamines, nasal sprays, decongestants or appropriate asthma medications.
- **No rest for the allergic** – Dust mites are one of the most common allergy and asthma triggers. To prevent your allergic guests from sneezing all night long, thoroughly dust the extra bedroom and wash bedding in hot water. If you have allergies and are doing the visiting, pack your own pillow or allergen-proof pillow cover.

Think you may have allergies or asthma, but aren't sure of the cause? An allergist may suggest [allergy testing](#) to determine the trigger and help find relief. For more information about allergies and asthma visit www.AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org.

Dr. Sami Nallamshetty is a graduate of Harvard Medical School in Boston where she completed a combined pediatric and adult allergy & immunology fellowship program at Brigham and Women's and Boston Children's Hospitals. She is double board certified in pediatric and adult allergy and immunology through the American Boards of Allergy and Immunology and Internal Medicine. She has been distinguished as a Fellow of the American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology. Dr. Nallamshetty has published her research in top scientific journals and has been awarded several research grants.



Dr. Nallamshetty specializes in managing conditions such as seasonal allergies, food allergies, asthma, eczema, sinus disease, and immunologic disorders. She is actively involved in our local community and is the Anaphylaxis Community Expert physician for the Allergy & Asthma Network/Mothers of Asthmatics. She works closely with families to help them better understand and prevent anaphylaxis and other allergic disorders. Dr. Sami Nallamshetty is currently accepting new pediatric and adult patients at both her Wesley Chapel and Carrollwood practice locations. She looks forward to helping you and your family

manage your allergies and improve your quality of life. Dr. Nallamshetty can be reached at 813-388-6855.

Dr. Daniel Reichmuth is a graduate of Indiana Medical School and at the University of South Florida. He completed his residency in internal medicine (and served as Chief Resident) and fellowships in both allergy and clinical immunology and clinical laboratory immunology. Dr. Reichmuth is dual board certified through the American Board of Allergy and Immunology (www.abai.org) and the American Board of Internal Medicine (www.abim.org). Dr. Reichmuth stays current in both of these boards (Allergy and Clinical Immunology and Internal Medicine) through Maintenance of Certification (MOC). The American Board of Allergy and Clinical Immunology is a conjoint board of The American Board of Pediatrics and the American Board of Internal Medicine. Dr. Reichmuth has also been selected by his peers in the Best Doctors in America[®] Database on numerous occasions. He is currently accepting new pediatric and adult patients at both his Wesley Chapel and Zephyrhills practice locations. Dr. Reichmuth can be reached at 813-779-8194.

