

in certain circumstances ([Boyce, Assa'ad, Burks, et al, 2010](#)). The traditional management of food allergy consists of avoiding the specific food or ingredient that causes the manifestations. Because children with food allergies (usually two or more) are at risk for inadequate nutrient intake and growth failure, it is recommended that they have an annual nutritional assessment to prevent such problems.

## **Nursing Care Management**

Nursing care of children with potential food allergy consists of assisting in collecting vital health assessment data for the establishment of a diagnosis and assisting with diagnostic tests. It is important for nurses to be informed about food allergy and provide parents and caregivers, as well as older children, with accurate information regarding food allergy.

Educate parents, teachers, and daycare workers regarding signs and symptoms of food allergy and reactions. People with food allergy should avoid unfamiliar foods and restaurants that do not disclose food ingredients. Labeling guidelines require that food additives (such as spices and flavoring) be clearly labeled on commercially-sold, store-bought foods. Hidden ingredients in prepared foods are also potential sources of food allergy.

Children with a history of food allergy may spend a considerable amount of time in daycare; therefore, persons working in daycare centers and other children's settings need to be properly educated regarding recognition and management of severe anaphylactic reactions (see [Critical Thinking Exercises](#) box).

## **Critical Thinking Exercises**

### **Food Allergy Anaphylaxis**

A group of nursing students is holding a health promotion fair at a local elementary school for first, second, and third graders. The nursing students have several booths set up in the school cafeteria. Three second-grade boys are engaging in horseplay in front of one of the booths when one of the boys, Jason, an 8-year-old child, suddenly starts coughing and clutching his throat. The students also observe that he is developing red splotches on his face, neck,