

# Arthur

# Binky Goes Nuts

UNDERSTANDING PEANUT ALLERGIES



Approved  
by Food Allergy  
Research &  
Education

ARTHUR is produced by WGBH Boston  
and 9 Story Entertainment, Inc.



Children's Educational Media Fund  
The Weezie Foundation



Funding for the Arthur Family Health Project is provided by the WGBH Children's Educational Media Fund, whose donors include The Weezie Foundation. Funding for ARTHUR is provided by public television viewers. Corporate funding is provided by Chuck E. Cheese's.

# Understanding Peanut Allergies

What makes peanut allergies so dangerous? How can a school or daycare be made safe for children with food allergies? Watch the ARTHUR episode “Binky Goes Nuts,” available at [pbskids.org/arthur/health](http://pbskids.org/arthur/health), then share the information below with your students as you do the activities on page 3. Adapt activities to include discussion about other food allergies that students in your class or school may have.

## FOOD ALLERGY FACTS

The most common food allergies are:

milk	shellfish
eggs	fish
peanuts	soy
tree nuts	wheat

Among these allergies, reactions to peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, and fish are most likely to be life-threatening and least likely to be outgrown.

Teach your students how to be a PAL to classmates with food allergies.

## Background Information

**What is a food allergy?** When someone with a food allergy eats or comes into contact with that specific food, his or her immune system triggers an allergic reaction. There is no cure for a food allergy. The only way to treat it is to completely remove that food from one's diet.

**What are the symptoms of an allergic reaction?** People have different reactions. Symptoms can include hives, itchiness, swollen throat, wheezing, nausea, and in severe cases, anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can occur suddenly and may cause death. Mild allergic reactions can be treated with antihistamines. Anaphylaxis needs to be treated immediately with epinephrine, available in an epinephrine auto-injector.

**Why are peanut allergies a serious concern?** People who are allergic to peanuts can experience life-threatening reactions to eating tiny amounts of peanuts. It's important that peanut allergic people avoid all peanut products. Foods such as chili, hot cocoa, crackers, soups, cookies, and chocolates sometimes contain trace amounts of peanut butter or peanut flour, ingredients that are often used as thickeners or flavorings. “Safe” foods can also be contaminated when they are made or packaged on the same machines that process peanut products.

**How can schools provide a safe environment for children with peanut allergies?** Teachers, nurses, and others must work closely with families and doctors. Allergic children should have allergy information, a treatment plan, and medicine kit on hand at all times. Adults responsible for the children must know how to use an epinephrine auto-injector in case of anaphylaxis. Children with severe peanut allergies often bring their own safe food for lunch and snacks. Schools also need to provide safe lunch options. The school needs to ensure that they have a clean place to eat, so the food is not contaminated. Classmates need to be taught simple facts and rules about peanut (and other food) allergies. For example, if a child who has just eaten a peanut butter sandwich and not washed hands gives a high five to a classmate with a peanut allergy, a small amount of peanut butter could get on the allergic child's hand. If the child's hand then gets into his or her mouth or eyes, the result could be a serious allergic reaction. “Be a PAL” activities (page 3) teach children how to help their classmates with food allergies stay safe.

For more information, visit Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) at [www.foodallergy.org/](http://www.foodallergy.org/).

\*Adapted from Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) Be a PAL: Protect A Life (PAL) Program. Used with permission.

# Classroom Activities

**Watch and discuss “Binky Goes Nuts.”** Ask children:

- What happens to Binky if he eats peanuts or nuts?
- At the grocery store, what does Binky’s mom say they have to do before they buy any food product? Why?
- Binky feels better after talking with Jenna. What do the two friends have in common?
- Do you know people with food allergies? What are they allergic to? How can you be a good friend and help them stay safe?

**Puppet play.** Have children use the Character Puppets (page 8) to act out scenes from “Binky Goes Nuts,” such as the doctor’s office, the grocery store, and Binky’s demonstration of the of an epinephrine auto-injector. Encourage children to create new original scenes. For example, Jenna goes to the doctor to learn about her milk allergy or Binky explains to Arthur how to be a good PAL (see the “Be a PAL” activity below).

**Guest speakers and family connections.** Invite the school nurse or the parent of a child with food allergies to talk about allergies and how students and staff can work together to make the classroom a safe, comfortable place for all kids, including those with allergies. Use the Peanut Allergies by Binky activity sheet (pages 4–5) before, during, or after the visit. Encourage children to take the activity sheet and Tips for Families (page 6) home to share with their families.

**Be a PAL.** Discuss the “How to Be a PAL” rules below. Invite kids to practice each rule with a skit. Ask: “What would you say and do?” Then distribute the “How to Be a PAL” licenses (page 7, English and Spanish).

**1. Don’t eat foods with peanuts around friends who have peanut allergies.**

**SKIT:** Binky and his friends are playing basketball. Some kids eating granola bars come over to join the game. (HINT: The kids eating granola bars might have bits of peanuts on their hands. When they touch the ball, the bits of peanuts could get on the ball and then onto Binky’s hands. Things on your hands can easily get in your mouth or eyes. For Binky, that could be dangerous.)

**2. Don’t share food.**

**SKIT:** Arthur brings in some candy to share with his friends.

**3. Wash your hands after you eat.**

**SKIT:** As they get up from the lunch table, some of Binky’s friends ask him if he wants to arm wrestle. (See the HINT in Role Play #1.)

**4. Say “no” to teasing and tricks. Food allergies are serious.**

**SKIT:** Binky and his friends are walking home. A kid starts teasing Binky, “Ooo, Binky, this peanut butter cracker is going to get you!”

**5. If your friend has an allergic reaction, tell a grown-up immediately.**

**SKIT:** Binky says his mouth feels itchy and he’s having trouble breathing.

**Peanut-free posters.** What rules do kids have to follow to eat at a peanut-free table? Discuss the scene in “Binky Goes Nuts,” then create posters.

## Read All About It



### FOR CHILDREN

*The Peanut Butter Jam* by Elizabeth Sussman Nassau

*The Peanut-Free Café* by Gloria Koster

*The Princess and the Peanut Allergy* by Wendy McClure

*Taking Food Allergies to School* by Ellen Weiner

### FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

*Food Allergies: A Complete Guide to Eating When Your Life Depends on It* by Scott Sicherer, M.D.

*The Peanut Allergy Answer Book*, 3rd edition by Michael C. Young, M.D.

## Binky Goes Nuts

When Binky discovers that he’s allergic to peanuts, he learns that the best way not to go nuts is to be well informed and to understand his allergy.



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# Peanut Allergies

by Binky



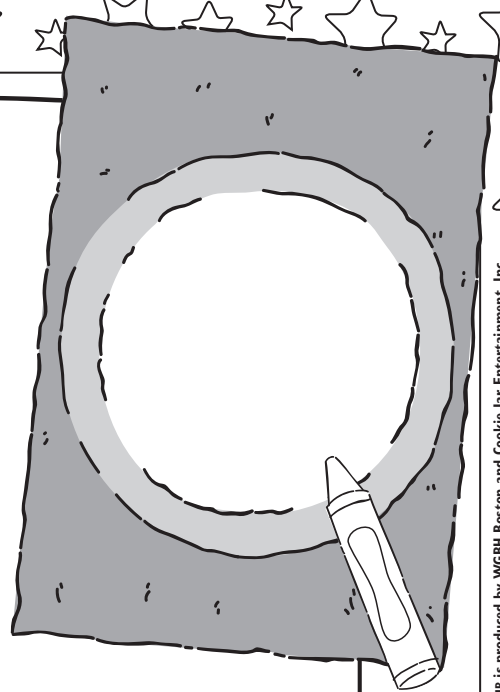
I'm allergic to peanuts. If I eat anything with peanuts in it, I get very sick. So I always read food labels really carefully!

To be safe, I bring my own food to school. When my friends pack peanut-free lunches, they can eat at the peanut-free table with me.

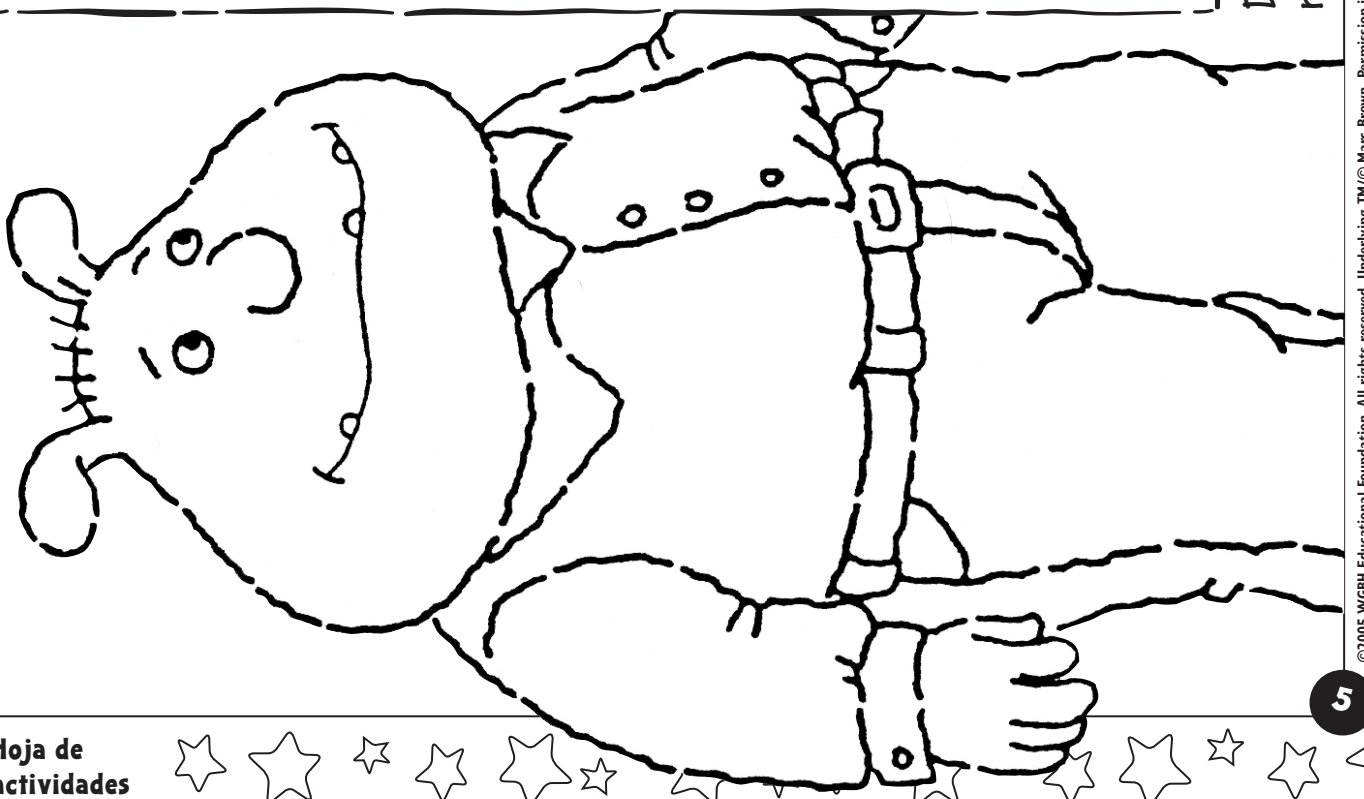
I'm a tough kid, but even tough kids need help from their pals. My friends wash their hands after they eat, help me watch out for peanuts, and know how to get help if I need it.

I'm still the same old Binky. I just know a whole lot about peanut allergies now. That's good, because the more you know, the easier it is to stay safe and get back to having fun.

Draw a peanut-free snack.







# Las alergias a los cacahuetes de Binky



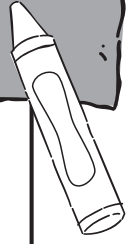
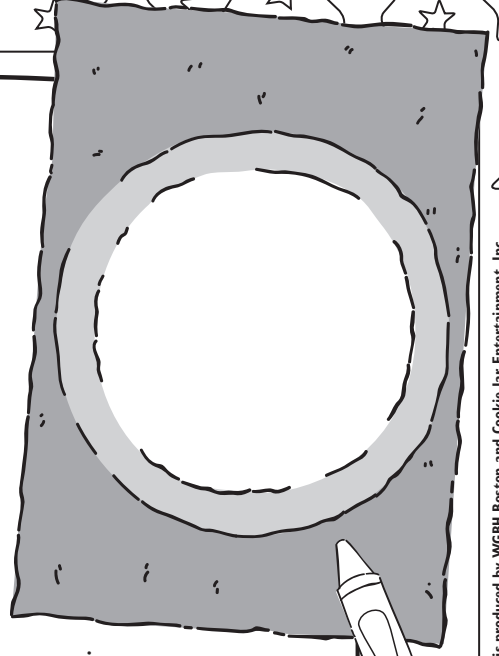
Soy alérgico a los cacahuetes (algunos los llaman maní). Si como algo que tenga cacahuetes, me pongo muy enfermo. Por eso siempre leo con cuidado las etiquetas de los alimentos.

Por precaución, llevo mi comida a la escuela. Cuando mis amigos llevan un almuerzo que no tiene cacahuetes, podemos comer todos juntos en la misma mesa.

Soy un niño fuerte, pero hasta los más fuertes necesitamos ayuda de nuestros amigos. Mis amigos me ayudan a cuidarme de los cacahuetes. Se lavan las manos después de comer y saben cómo buscar ayuda si la necesito.

Soy el mismo Binky de siempre. Lo único es que ahora sé mucho más sobre las alergias a los cacahuetes.

Y eso es bueno porque al saber más, es más fácil tener cuidado y poder pasarla bien.



Dibuja una comida que no tenga cacahuetes.

# Peanut Allergies

## Tips for Families

Our class has been learning about peanut allergies. Peanut allergies are serious because reactions to a tiny amount of peanuts can be very severe.

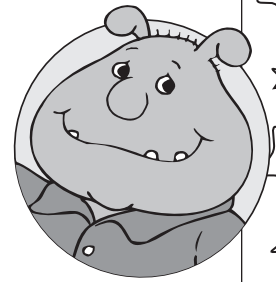
As your child has learned, kids with peanut allergies are just like other kids, with one important difference. They have to avoid contact with all peanut products. Peanuts are often a hidden ingredient in foods like crackers, cookies, chili, and chocolates.

If your child has a friend with peanut allergies, try packing a lunch without peanut products so the two of them can eat lunch together at school.

If your child wants to invite the friend over to play, that's great!

Here are some tips for making the visit safe and comfortable.

- Talk with the friend's family about how to avoid an allergic reaction.
- Get written directions on what to do if the child has an allergic reaction.
- Ask for a phone number that you can call if questions come up.



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# Las alergias a los cacahuetes

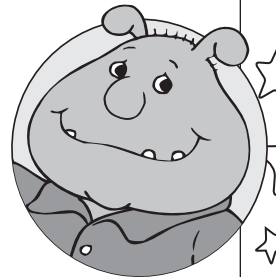
## Consejos para las familias

En clase estudiamos las alergias a los cacahuetes o al maní. Se trata de alergias muy importantes pues la reacción a una cantidad diminuta de cacahuetes puede ser muy grave.

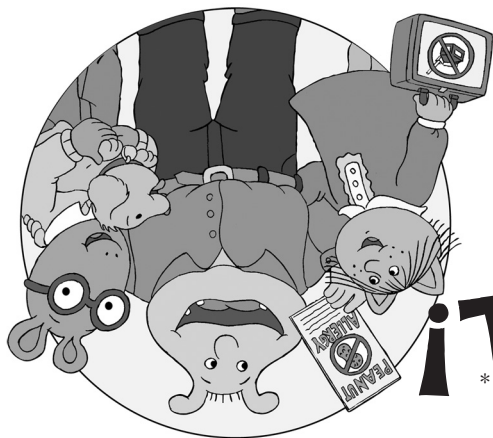
Los estudiantes aprendieron que los niños con alergias a los cacahuetes son iguales a los demás niños, con una sola diferencia importante: tienen que evitar todo contacto con productos que tengan cacahuetes. Los cacahuetes a menudo son un ingrediente oculto en comidas como galletas, chili y chocolates.

Si su niño tiene un amigo alérgico a los cacahuetes y usted puede empacarle un almuerzo que no contenga cacahuetes, ambos podrán almorzar juntos en la escuela. Si su niño quiere invitar a ese amigo a jugar, no se preocupe. He aquí varios consejos para garantizar la seguridad y comodidad de todos.

- Hable con la familia del amigo acerca de cómo evitar los problemas de la alergia a los cacahuetes.
- Pida instrucciones escritas de qué hacer si el niño sufre una reacción alérgica.
- Pida un número telefónico al cual puede llamar si surge alguna pregunta.



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Protect A Life

Be a PAL!

# How to Be a PAL



1. Don't eat foods with peanuts around friends with peanut allergies.



2. Don't share food.



3. Wash your hands after you eat.



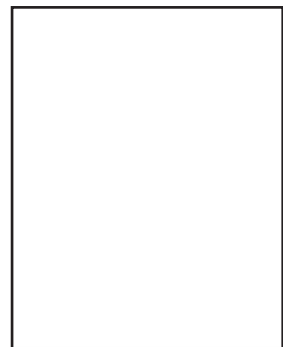
4. Food allergies are serious. Say "no" to teasing and tricks.



5. If your friend has an allergic reaction, tell a grown-up quickly.



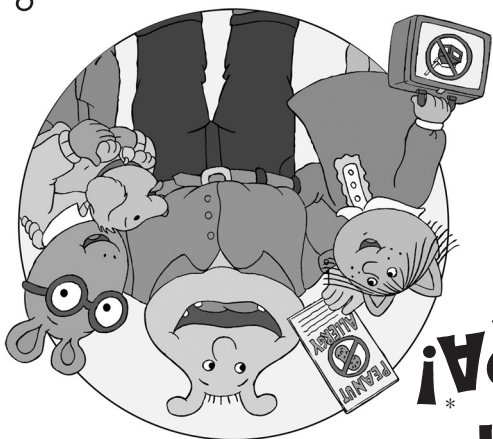
Draw or paste your picture here.



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Adaptado del programa Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE) Be a PAL: Protect A Life (PAL). Uso autorizado.

Cómo Proteger al Amigo

¡Un buen COMPA!

# Como ser Un buen COMPA



1. No comas nada que contenga cacahuets si estás con un amigo que es alérgico a los cacahuets.



2. No compartas alimentos.



3. Lávate las manos después de comer.



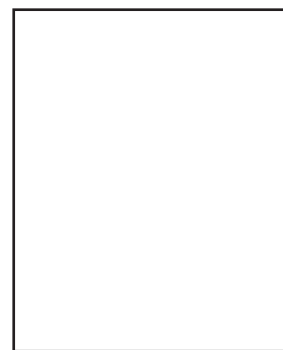
4. Las alergias a los cacahuets pueden ser graves. No te burles de quienes las padecen.



5. Si tu amigo sufre una reacción alérgica, avísale de inmediato a un adulto.



Dibuja o pega tu foto aquí.



Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

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PLEGAR AQUI

# Character Puppets

Color and cut out the puppets. Option 1: Carefully cut out the holes. Put two fingers through the holes. Your fingers become the puppet's legs. Option 2: Tape the pictures to Popsicle sticks or rulers to make stick puppets.

