

Good Morning,

As one of the millions of Canadians with a life threatening food allergy, I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to voice my concerns for your consideration when drafting your new federal travel regulations.

Anaphylaxis is a terrifying experience for all concerned. Imagine yourself 35,000 feet in the air, and someone three rows away from you opens a bag of peanuts or cashews to enjoy on their trip. The consequences of an airline's indifference to this situation can impact the safety of all passengers onboard

- Education is key - staff training and education should be mandatory - the difference between "food intolerance" versus a "life threatening condition" is essential
- Advance planning by both the traveller and the airline should allow for consideration of this disability. A phone call at time of booking and again 48 hours prior to flight, should enable the airline to be prepared with protocols in place to manage food allergies
- One hugely important accommodation is a public announcement at the onset of a flight. West Jet is a perfect example of consideration by not serving nuts or snacks that may contain nuts (with advance warning), as well as making the following statement before boarding *"We have a guest traveling with us today who has a severe allergy to peanuts/nuts. We ask that you do not open or consume any peanuts, nuts or nut products during this flight. Thanks for your help."* When travelling to Cuba, the airline of our choice made such an announcement. On a flight of 100 people, there were two additional passengers with a life threatening allergy to nuts - that is 3% of the passenger list! We did not know one another and neither of the other two individuals had thought to request such an announcement. All were delighted to see this and we hope that other airlines will follow suit.
- Airlines have worked very hard to enforce their strict "No Smoking" policy due to the health considerations of others. If a smoker can make it through a flight by following the airline policy to consider the health of other passengers, surely the individual with a life threatening allergy can expect the same or even greater level of concern and consideration for their disability. I do believe that this should be regulated to ensure that all airlines follow suit.

Although my points pertain to airline travel, the same considerations regarding food allergies should be made on all modes of transportation. Thank you for this opportunity to provide my input and speak up for the millions of Canadians that this affects.

Life is a precious gift.

Best Regards,

Deborah Diehl-Wood