



Health & Safety Alert #39-01-09

Peanut Butter Safety

The purpose of this Alert is to heighten the awareness of all readers on the potential risks when eating peanut butter. A clump of peanut butter lodged in the throat is extremely difficult to dislodge. The combination of peanut butter and partially chewed bread makes a plug which can block the airway and be fatal.

Because peanut butter offers an enjoyable source of nutrition, here are reminders of how to enjoy it safely.

- Peanut butter should be applied in a thin layer (1 – 1 ½ teaspoons for one slice of bread, no more than 1 tablespoon for two slices).
- Offer fluid to drink before and during eating to moisten the mouth and reduce sticking.
- Bite sizes should be small, about the size of a quarter, and closely monitored. Each bite must be chewed well and swallowed before the next one is taken.
- Sips of fluid between bites will help ensure that the mouth and throat are cleared of peanut butter.
- The pace of eating should be monitored to ensure individuals are not rushing or putting too much in their mouth.
- Teams should assess a specific individual's risk whenever there are known eating problems but **stay alert with everyone.**

For questions or comments regarding the above Alert, please contact the MUI/Registry Unit at (614) 995-3810.