



5 STEPS TO MANAGE FOOD ALLERGY ANXIETY

A GUIDE FOR
STRESSED OUT FOOD ALLERGY
MOMS

LEXIE BELLE, MS LMHC

COUNSELOR AND
FOOD ALLERGY MOM

5 Step to Manage Anxiety for Food Allergy Moms

Hi I'm Alexie (Lexie) Belle. I'm a licensed mental health counselor in Florida. I'm also a wife, a mommy to three great kids, a Christ follower, and a food allergy mom. I provide counseling and therapy to women and teenage girls who struggle with depression, anxiety, postpartum depression, and to food allergy moms (or female caregivers) who suffer with anxiety related to caring for a food allergic little one.

If you downloaded this book, it means you are a **GREAT, PROACTIVE, CARING,** and **LOVING** mom/caregiver. It means you are not willing to accept that you have to be scared or anxious as an allergy mom. Admitting your anxiety is the first step to overcoming it!

I hope you find some comfort in knowing you are not alone in your struggle. I hear you, I get you, I feel for you. And, I hope you find the information in these pages helpful.

[FARE \(https://www.foodallergy.org/\)](https://www.foodallergy.org/) estimates somewhere around 5.9 million children under age 18 have food allergies. That means there at least 2 kids in every classroom with a food allergy. Many of them with allergies to multiple foods. ([Here is a full facts sheet](#)→ <https://www.foodallergy.org/sites/default/files/migrated-files/file/Final-FARE-Food-Allergy-Facts-Statistics.pdf>) Each of those 5.9 million children are attached to a caregiver (a mom, dad, or other caregiver) who takes the lead when it comes to keeping their allergic little one "safe". For this primary "gatekeeper" safe is a relative term. Safe might not even be a word they can use when it comes to something as simple as food. Because, for them, the reality is **food can kill**. Can you imagine anything else more anxiety provoking?

So how do you start to put a pin in that anxiety balloon? Start with number 1:

5 Step to Manage Anxiety for Food Allergy Moms

1. Accept it and say it out loud: Allergy moms don't often feel they have a choice in admitting how they feel. We often don't feel like we have time to feel anything. Who has time to feel when you reading labels, calling food manufacturers, and making sure the world in general is safe for a food allergic little one? You do! You have the time; you get to make the time when it seems impossible. Because it's okay to **be** anxious, it's ok to **say** you're anxious; it's ok to **ask for help!** You're not alone in this. Therapy is a great place to get help to stop feeling anxious.

Talk with your insurance company, your church, a friend, or a hop on Psychology Today (make this a link) to find a therapist in your area who specializes in helping manage anxiety specifically related to food allergies. Make a list of the top two you might want to see. It's ok to ask questions before you choose a therapist.

Therapist 1: Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Questions I need answered: (you might want to ask if they specialize in anxiety, if they have experience working with moms of little ones with food allergies, if they focus on any type of therapy in particular, and how their skills can help you)

Therapist 2: Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Questions I need answered:

Now that you've found at therapist, how do you make time?

5 Step to Manage Anxiety for Food Allergy Moms

2. Connect. Being an allergy mom can feel incredibly lonely and isolating. It can also feel like it's you against the world and no one could possibly understand how tough it is to manage all of this. Friends and family may sympathize, but there is nothing like having a group of people who live with the same fears and worries. A group who will feel sad with you, will understand your anxiety, and will celebrate allergy wins with you. Social media sites like Facebook and Meet Up are great places to find a group of moms. If this sounds too intimidating, maybe start with a parent in your child's classroom, or at church, who also has a food allergic child. You can also seek out support groups on websites like FARE (link this) and Allergy Home (link this). Write down the groups you might want to connect with.

Facebook/Meet up Groups: _____

Where do they meet? : _____

What day: _____ What Time: _____

How often do they meet?: _____ Kids Welcome?: **Y** or **N**

FARE Groups: _____

Where do they meet?: _____

What day: _____ What Time: _____

How often do they meet?: _____ Kids Welcome?: **Y** or **N**

5 Step to Manage Anxiety for Food Allergy Moms

4. Make a Plan. Once you have some questions answered, it's time to make a plan. Meet with your child's allergist and come up with a safety plan and an emergency care plan. Make sure to keep copies of each of your plans with you and wherever your child is cared for without you (school, childcare, grandparents' homes, and any other place your child may go without you). FARE has a great emergency care plan you can fill out with your child's allergist. You can find the free resource **here** (link this to the emergency care plan).

5. Don't do it alone. Find one close friend, or a family member, you can trust to care for your little one so you can get a break. Take care of you first so you can take care of your family and act quickly on plans when you need to. When we take a break, refresh, and "fill our tanks", we're better all around in emergencies and non-emergencies alike.

The most important thing is to remember **YOU ARE NOT ALONE**. Remember, there are 5.9 million kids with families who experience some of the same fears and struggles you do. That means there is at least one other allergy mom/dad/caregiver in your child's classroom. Find them. Talk to them. Connect with them. Build your team. You deserve it. You need them. And they need you!

If you have any questions about what you've read, feel free to send me an email to lexie@herhopebehavioralhealth.com or call 561-600-8764. Thanks for reading and remember:

Connect, plan, heal.

Links and helpful resources:

<https://www.foodallergy.org/>

<https://www.allergyhome.org/>

<https://www.foodallergy.org/sites/default/files/migrated-files/file/emergency-care-plan.pdf>

About the Author: Hi I'm Alexie (Lexie) Belle. I'm a licensed mental health counselor in Florida. I'm also a wife, a mommy to three great kids, a Christ follower, and a food allergy mom. I provide counseling and therapy to women and teenage girls who struggle with depression, anxiety, postpartum depression, and food allergy related anxiety. If you have any questions about what you've read, feel free to send me an email to lexie@herhopebehavioralhealth.com or call 561-600-8764.

Her Hope

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
created for women, by women