



ALLERGEN INFORMATION FOR OPERATIONAL RATIONS

According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) about two percent of adults in the United States suffer from food allergies. Furthermore, the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network has reported that in the past five years the estimated number of Americans with food allergies has doubled. Similarly, the Military Services, the Office of the Surgeon General and Military Dietitians have seen an increase in Warfighters exhibiting allergic reactions to a wide variety of foods. The eight major food allergens are milk, egg, soy, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish and wheat.



WHY IT IS NEEDED:

Operational rations may contain ingredients that are allergens, potentially causing adverse health effects to Warfighters with severe food allergies. Many military rations contain gluten, which is present in barley, rye, wheat and oats. In addition, food allergies may lead to under-consumption of operational rations and may cause potentially serious health risks including anaphylaxis that may trigger a series of symptoms affecting the respiratory system, gastrointestinal tract, skin, or cardiovascular system. These reactions can be mild to life threatening.

The only way to prevent an allergic reaction to a particular food is to avoid it. The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act has required that since January 2006, all commercial and military ration manufacturers of packaged foods containing any of the eight major allergens list the allergens present in the food ingredient statement. In addition, manufacturers are encouraged to avoid/eliminate cross-contamination and to follow good manufacturing practices to help eliminate adverse allergic reactions in food components present in combat rations.

COMMENTS:

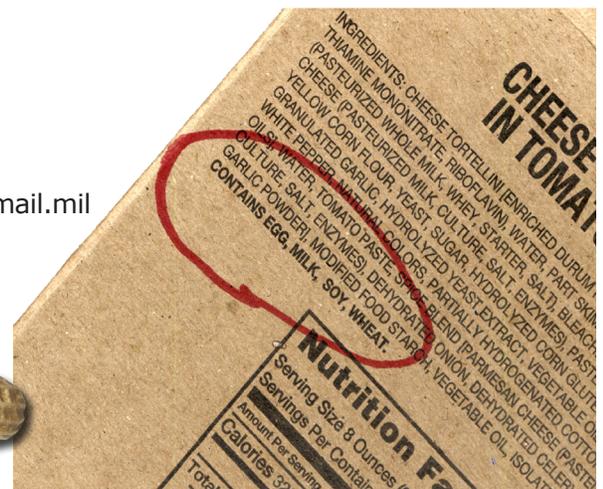
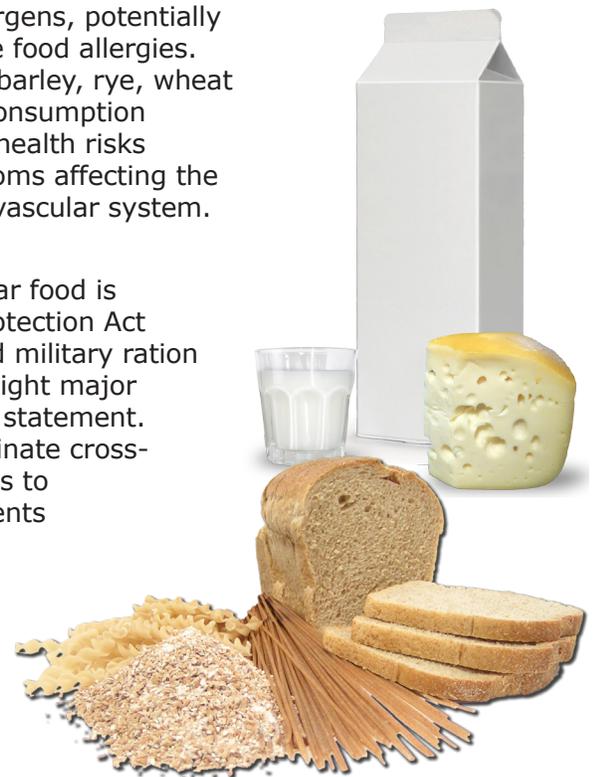
The labeling of allergen warnings on combat ration components is meant for consumer education but not to indicate the suitability of combat rations for deployed Warfighters with severe food allergies or food intolerances. Only a Warfighter's primary medical care provider is qualified to make determinations as to their deployability due to food allergies or food intolerance.

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