

The holidays a trying time for food-allergic teens

AMY WESTRICK
Staff Reporter
FERRIS

The holiday months: filled with celebration, tradition, and especially, food. This time of the year welcomes a multitude of festive pastries, main courses, and side dishes, all begging to be devoured.

For most, the holidays are a time when over-indulgence is expected, but for teens with serious food allergies, the holidays can become a nightmarish guessing game and a test of wills.

The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN) reports that "about 1 out of every 25 school age children in the United States suffers from a food allergy." In addition, "Teens are the highest risk group for fatal, food-induced anaphylaxis," and this occurs mostly "when a teen is away from home and with friends."

East Valley freshman and Vox reporter Ciara Totton has lived with allergies to wheat, red meat, sugar, milk and corn syrup for most of her life.

"Until the age of 4, my family and I were never fully aware of the fact that I had severe allergies," Totton said. "Before that I would eat normal food like everyone else, but then I would become extremely sick and suffer from a bad cough and would usually have to go to the hospital. Finally my parents took me to an allergy specialist to determine exactly what I was allergic to. Ever since then I have been on a strict diet eating basically everything organic for the past eleven or so years."

Jordyn Burdick, a home schooled tenth grader, suffers from a milk intolerance that has recently developed into an allergy.

"Anything with chocolate or cheese has to be avoided, but for the most part it's not really different," Burdick said.

This time of year can be especially challenging for teens with food allergies. For some, even trace amounts of allergens can cause a fatal reaction, and the holidays are packed with new and enticing foods that may contain hidden allergens. FAAN states that "most individuals who have had a reaction ate a food they thought was safe."

"When I was little, my allergies were extremely severe," Totton said. "As time progressed, the food allergies seemed to go away. About a year ago, I found that I could occasionally 'cheat' and I would only get a little sick."

Although Totton's allergies are not life threatening, she still copes with food allergy pitfalls

during the holiday season.

"I found it most difficult when I was younger because I would have to eat differently than everyone else, and would therefore look 'weird' and 'different'. During the holidays it is most difficult because there are so many foods that I may have never eaten before in all my life and it is a huge temptation not to eat it," Totton said.



Stock photo For Burdick,

the holidays are more of the same routine.

"My allergy isn't too serious; it's just kind of an inconvenience" Burdick said.

She sums up her milk allergy precautions: "I avoid it, or just eat it anyways."

When dining out, whether at another home or a restaurant, food allergy sufferers must keep certain preventative measures in mind. Avoiding situations where different foods are kept in close quarters, like bakeries and buffets, is essential. Here allergens can spread easily from one food to another. Another must is communicating one's allergy with whoever is cooking.

"Normally, whenever my family and I would go out to dinner my mom would have to pack all my own food in a cooler and I would not be able to eat any of the food from the restaurant," Totton said. "Now, though, I have been able to find certain foods at restaurants that are healthy and I can eat."

If a reaction does occur, there are important tips food-allergic teens and their friends need to be aware of. Teens with allergies should always carry their medication, and their friends as well, as they must know the early symptoms of their reaction in order to best prevent a fatal incident.

Totton has first hand experience with how serious a food allergy can be.

"One time when I was little I ate something I was allergic to and I suffered from a very bad cough and soon I could hardly even breathe. My parents had to call an ambulance and I spent a week in intensive care."

Both Totton and Burdick note that specialty stores like Huckleberries, Trader Joes, and Fred Meyer are particularly helpful in catering to food allergies. Most grocery stores carry soy substitutes for milk allergies as well.

The FAAN website cites a survey of food-allergic teens that reports "68 percent thought their lives would be easier if their friends and peers knew more about food allergy" and "Approximately 60 percent said they wished their school would do more to teach their friends and peers about food allergy."

Hey studs: get the best snow tires for optimum safety during winter

CHERISE HENSLEY
Staff Reporter
POST FALLS

With winter looming ahead in the Pacific Northwest, many people are filled with dread. Driving in snow and on ice is never a fun experience for anyone.

This is especially true for the newer drivers: teenagers. Everyone knows that some teens are a little crazy at the wheel.

Crazydriversplusbadweatherconditionsequalsdanger. Many accidents occur during the winter because of the dangers snow brings. How can driving in the winter be safer? What can protect us from Old Man Winter's icy rage?

Many people have looked at car tires as saviors. Others, however, rely on skill to get them through hazardous winter driving.

Tires, in fact, do make a difference. Studded snow tires are probably the most popular tires used in the winter.

These tires have a deeper tread that is wonderful for traction. Having more traction helps prevent a person from sliding on a slick road.

Not only are there snow tires, but also there are all-season tires. All-season tires are kept on a car all year round, whereas snow tires are used solely for the winter.

Shandi Gustin, a saleswoman at Alton's Tires, knows all about the varied tire assortment.

What's the biggest difference between snow tires and all-season tires?

"Softer rubber," Shandi says.

The snow tires have a softer rubber that helps them grip cold roads more than normal tires. Shandi believes that a studded snow tire is better than an all-season tire.

"It has the extra grip that an all-season just doesn't have."

Another way to have tires with better traction is siping. At a car shop, workers can make small cuts, called sipes, into each tread in a tire. These sipes give tires a better hold on slippery surfaces.

"Studded snow tires come from the factories with sipes already," Shandi says.

Although snow tires seem the most logical solution to winter driving, people use their own methods. The single most important tip for driving safely is to slow down when roads are slick.

Another piece of advice is to take three times the distance for braking. Sliding usually occurs when a driving slams on the brakes on an icy road.

Snowflakes may be beautiful, but the driving disasters they bring are not. Driving in winter conditions requires a person to drive much more carefully, even with special tires.

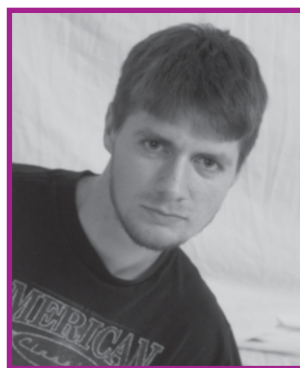
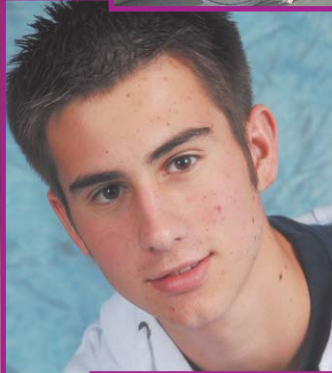


Travis Beagles/Rogers

Studded snow tires add traction when driving on icy roads.

Congratulations Seniors of 2009

From *Portraits by Juls*



Tincan Youth Media is new appellation for eMerge

Tincan's award winning youth news video production program has changed its name from eMerge News to Tincan Youth Media to better reflect the activities and direction of the program.

Teens will move from a news package format to producing short documentaries focused on community issues.

This will give teens greater opportunity to explore a topic in-depth and exercise more advanced video production skills.

The Youth Media group meets at Tincan Mondays and Wednesdays from 3-5 p.m. at Tincan's downtown offices.

Two new after-school groups meet at Haver-

male and Rogers High Schools. These new programs produce PSA's and short news packages, as well as documentaries about issues in their respective neighborhoods.

Tincan Youth Media is also partnering with the YMCAs Real to Reel Youth Film Group to compete in this year's First Night 48 Hour Film Festival. Dec. 5-7 teens will help produce a short film alongside seasoned adult veterans of this fast-paced format.

For more information on any of these programs or projects please contact Joseph Comine at 744-0972 or joe@tincan.org.



one day, I'll
serve the vulnerable.

Choose Social Work at EWU

Eastern Washington University's School of Social Work's Aging Studies Program gives you the opportunity to help the frail and vulnerable elderly. There's a high demand for individuals with diverse backgrounds. Nationally recognized faculty will train you in a collaborative, real-world environment for one of the 10 fastest-growing careers.

Social Work Programs

- Bachelor of Social Work
contact Diane Somerday, MSW 509.359.6482
- Full-time Master of Social Work
- Part-time Master of Social Work
contact Patricia Valdés, MSW, PhD 509.359.6772



www.ewu.edu/socialwork

Hey Seniors! Now is the time to start booking your appointments for Senior Pictures. Call Portraits by Juls for details on complete senior packages. Mention this add for an additional free sheet of your choice.

Portraits by *Juls* 509-216-0537

The Vox Blog

Read. Think. Type. Troll.

www.spokesmanreview.com/blogs/vox/