

For Colorado family, it's allergies all around

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Kloser family (left to right): Mike, Emily, Christian and Heidi

Kids avoid long list of foods, but not athletic lifestyle.

(HealthDay) -- Emily Kloser wasn't too concerned when her son's doctor first told her he had signs that pointed to a future with allergies.

What the Vail, Colo., mom didn't know at the time was just how serious those allergies would be.

Kloser's son, Christian, ended up developing life-threatening allergies to eggs, milk, soy, [wheat](#), peanuts, seeds and [tree nuts](#). The first significant sign of an allergy came the first time he had an egg and he broke out in [hives](#).

"It was obvious that he had lots of food allergies," Kloser said. "He'd often have a [runny nose](#) and blotchy skin."

Once Kloser and her husband, Mike, learned just how many things

Christian was allergic to, the real challenge began. "I had to relearn how to cook," Emily Kloser said. "I now read every label, every time. Even though you have a brand you trust, sometimes they change how they make things."

Because her son developed allergies at such a young age, Kloser said he didn't really know what he was missing and seemed to deal with it just fine. In fact, she said, when she'd make rice cereal treats for him to have at other children's birthday parties, the other children would often ask if they could have what Christian was having instead of the birthday cake.

At about age 5, she said, Christian outgrew his allergy to wheat, and a short time later he was able to eat eggs again. Around age 7 or 8, he was able to start drinking milk and eating [dairy foods](#). Perhaps not surprisingly, one of the first foods he wanted to try was that ubiquitous kids' meal: pizza.

Now 18, he's still allergic to peanuts, seeds and tree nuts and, possibly, shellfish.

But just about the time Christian was outgrowing some of his allergies, his older sister Heidi had an allergic reaction after eating an [avocado](#). Soon after that, they learned that she was also allergic to [walnuts](#).

Both of the Kloser children are competitive [skiers](#), and the family has traveled the world, despite the challenges of living with such serious food allergies. Emily Kloser said she learned to pack certain foods that her kids would need, and she learned how to ask about how foods were prepared in different languages so she'd be ready when they were away from the United States.

She said that living with the kids' food allergies "really made us all healthier" because it was easier to eat in than to eat at restaurants.

But it isn't always smooth sailing. Just a couple of years ago, Christian was traveling with a coach to a competitive ski event and was inadvertently exposed to something he was allergic to. They suspect it was a peanut exposure. He was back on the mountain, skiing downhill, when he started to feel badly. He didn't have antihistamine medication or an epinephrine injection with him to counteract his allergies, like he usually does, but his coach got him quickly to a hospital, though it took hours for Christian to get back to normal.

Still, Kloser said the family tries to live a normal life. "When I first found out, I sobbed," she said. "I wondered how he'd go to college, or even how he'd go to a friend's house. But you just have to educate the people your children come into contact with, and trust your children and the other adults in their lives. Have a plan and stick to the plan if something happens. But, don't get so in a panic over it that you start making your kid anxious."

More information: A companion article gives more detail on [kids' food allergies](#).

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