



FOOD ALLERGY INITIATIVE CHICAGO

*Finding a cure for
life-threatening food allergies*

Campaign Information

It is hard to appreciate the severity of a food allergy, until one has experienced it first-hand. The formation of local groups, like FAI Chicago, are essential to creating a collective national voice. With other cities following suit, a national awareness of the prevalence and potential epidemic scope of this disease, will thereby increase federal funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and other federal agencies for food allergy research. FAI's ultimate goal is to find a cure for life-threatening food allergies. Furthermore, FAI is committed to ensuring that people with food allergies are safe through education and advocacy.

2010 Campaign Goal: \$2.0 million
2009 Campaign: \$1.1 million
2008 Campaign: \$1.1 million

Background Information

Headquartered in New York, the Food Allergy Initiative is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to finding life-saving treatment and ultimately a cure for food allergies. Founded in 1998 by concerned parents and grandparents, FAI is the largest private source of funding for food allergy research in the United States. Funds donated to FAI are allocated to four areas: advocacy, education, clinical activities and research. Each area of focus helps food-allergic families by giving them hope, knowledge and a voice in Washington and in their community.

FAI Chicago

Founded in 2007 by a group of dedicated local parents, FAI Chicago is a local extension of the national FAI organization. FAI Chicago raises money to find a cure for food allergies and works to heighten food allergy awareness in the Chicagoland area.

Additional Donation Opportunities

FAI funds top of the line research. To help FAI accomplish this task visit the website at www.faiusa.org and donate today. To send a letter to your representatives in Congress, connect with fellow advocates on Facebook and Twitter, and find out about upcoming events, click on the advocacy or local tab on the FAI website.

Why Support FAI?

Imagine that every time a child sits down for a meal or reaches for a snack he or she feels fear – or every time a mother prepares food for her child, she is literally responsible for her child's life. People with life-threatening food allergies, and those who care for them, do not have to imagine these challenges as they are ever present - 3 times a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks of the year.

The fear can be devastating and it is very real - food allergies are that dangerous. Even the most extreme measures cannot fully protect a child from cross contamination during meal or snack time or touching the contaminated hands of others. Food-allergic children and their parents worry about the mere simplicities of life that most people take for granted like play dates and going to school as well as defining moments like going to camp, trick or treating or the innocence of a first kiss.

Food-allergic reactions are estimated to send 125,000 Americans to emergency rooms every year – over 10% of which are anaphylactic reactions, a severe and potentially fatal allergic reaction. Important facts to consider:

- The national **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)** estimates that 3 million children under the age of 18 have food allergies of varying degrees of severity.
- As stated by the **CDC** “from 1997-2007, the prevalence of reported food allergies increased 18% among children under age 18 years.”
- The **CDC** also reported that children with food allergies are two to four times more likely to have other related conditions such as asthma and other allergies, compared with children without food allergies.
- According to the **Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (JACI)**, the number of children with a peanut allergy doubled between 1997 and 2002.
- The **World Health Organization (WHO)** describes food allergies that are on the rise in industrialized countries as “important health issues.”

If food-allergic people continue to increase at this rate it will take on epidemic proportions.

Frequently Asked Questions

<p>What is FAI Chicago?</p>	<p>Founded in 2007 by a group of dedicated parents, FAI Chicago is a local extension of the national FAI organization. FAI Chicago raises money to find a cure for food allergies and works to heighten food allergy awareness in the Chicagoland area. Since 2007, FAI Chicago has raised \$2.3 million. Every Chicago member has a child with a life-threatening food allergy, has a life-threatening food allergy or is a doctor who treats food-allergic patients.</p>
<p>What is your relationship with FAI New York?</p>	<p>FAI is headquartered in New York. FAI Chicago is a local extension. FAI Chicago is supported by a dedicated broad base of volunteers who raise funds for cutting-edge food allergy research. All studies funded by FAI Chicago are pre-approved by FAI’s Medical Advisory Board. The formation of local chapters, like FAI Chicago, is essential to creating a collective national voice. With other cities following suit, a national awareness of the prevalence and potential epidemic scope of this disease, will thereby increase federal funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for food allergy research.</p>
<p>How are funds raised by FAI Chicago allocated?</p>	<p>Funds donated to FAI New York are allocated to four different areas: advocacy, education, clinical activities and research. FAI Chicago allocates a portion of funds raised to support community awareness initiatives, such as community education programs through Children’s Memorial Hospital. The remaining funds are allocated to ground breaking research projects that FAI Chicago approves. Out of the eight research projects that FAI supports, FAI Chicago currently provides funding for four important studies: (1) the development of a Chinese herbal therapy that may prevent life-threatening reactions to peanuts, tree nuts, fish and shellfish; (2) a tracking study of 640 infants over five years to determine whether or not early exposure to peanuts will prevent the development of peanut allergy; (3) a study of the role of a newly discovered inflammatory chemical in food allergy; (4) and <i>currently investigating a potential research project for gluten allergies.</i></p>

<p>Tell me about the four areas that FAI funds? (Advocacy, Clinical Activities, Education and Research)</p>	<p>Advocacy: FAI serves as a voice for millions of families by asking the federal government and private sources to collaborate in search of a cure. FAI works to develop and implement public policies that improve the quality of life for people with food allergies, playing an integral role in establishing national, state and local guidelines for anaphylaxis and food safety.</p> <p>Clinical Activities: By funding multi-disciplinary programs involving allergists, immunologists, pediatricians, internists, gastroenterologists, nutritionists, and patients, FAI seeks to improve the identification and treatment of people at risk for food allergies.</p> <p>Education: FAI promotes increased awareness of food allergies and anaphylaxis among the media, health care workers, camps, restaurants, food manufacturers and education and childcare professionals.</p> <p>Research: FAI supports basic and clinical research worldwide. FAI-sponsored research seeks to find a cure and improve clinical treatment for anaphylaxis and chronic diseases of the skin and gastrointestinal tract caused by food allergies. The FAI Medical Advisory Board, which is comprised of leading experts in the field, identifies and recommends the most promising studies for funding and ensures that all research is rigorously peer-reviewed.</p>
<p>How much money has FAI raised in total?</p>	<p>FAI has contributed more than \$65 million toward the fulfillment of its mission. FAI is committed to funding research to find a cure; to improving diagnosis and treatment; and to keeping patients safe through education and advocacy.</p>
<p>How much money has FAI Chicago raised since 2007?</p>	<p>In the past two years, FAI Chicago has raised \$2.2 million (\$1.1 million in 2008 and \$1.1 million in 2009). Our goal in 2010 is to raise \$2 million.</p>
<p>What are the differences Between FAI, FAAN and MOCHA?</p>	<p>FAI is the largest private source of funding for food allergy research in the United States.</p> <p>FAAN, the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network, also raises money for food allergies. Although they have recently increased their focus on research, they are primarily focused on education and advocacy.</p> <p>MOCHA is a support group for Mothers of Children Having Allergies. Mocha provides parents with tips for dealing with day-to-day aspects of managing food allergies and to help you cope with the stress that goes along with it.</p> <p>FAI Chicago is the only organization in Illinois that raises money to fund research for food allergies.</p>
<p>What differentiates FAI from other organizations that raise funds for Food Allergy related activities?</p>	<p>In 2009 FAI merged with <i>The Food Allergy Project</i>, creating the largest private source of funding for food allergy research in the United States. While some organizations focus on certain aspects of food allergies, we focus on our end goal: to find a cure for life-threatening food allergies, allowing our scope to cover all necessary areas of this disease: advocacy, clinical activity, education and most importantly research. We also associate with organizations nationwide that help support the food-allergic community.</p>
<p>What are your sources of funding?</p>	<p>FAI is supported solely by donations from corporations, foundations and dedicated individuals.</p>

<p>Why are there so many children/people with life-threatening food allergies?</p>	<p>The cause is unknown and that is why FAI works so hard to fund research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The national Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 3 million children under the age of 18 have food allergies of varying degrees of severity. • As stated by the CDC “from 1997-2007, the prevalence of reported food allergies increased 18% among children under age 18 years.” • The CDC also reported that children with food allergies are two to four times more likely to have other related conditions such as asthma and other allergies, compared with children without food allergies. • According to the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (JACI), the number of children with a peanut allergy doubled between 1997 and 2002. • The World Health Organization (WHO) describes food allergies that are on the rise in industrialized countries as “important health issues.” <p>If food-allergies continue to increase at this rapid rate, the disease will take on epidemic proportions. There are few if any answers as to why they have become more prevalent, but promising research is underway and FAI is at the fore-front of making that happen.</p>
<p>What are the main life-threatening food allergens?</p>	<p>Although a person can be allergic to any food, eight allergens are responsible for 90% of all reactions: cow’s milk, egg, peanut, tree nuts (walnuts, pecans, almonds, cashews, etc.), fish, shellfish, wheat and soy. However, there is evidence that other allergens (such as sesame) are increasing in prevalence as well.</p>
<p>How can I get involved?</p>	<p>FAI has many ways for you to get involved: volunteer to help plan the annual FAI Chicago fundraiser each fall; join FAI Chicago’s efforts to raise money to find a cure; or visit our website at www.faiusa.org and donate today. To send a letter to your representatives in Congress, connect with fellow advocates on Facebook and Twitter, and to find out about upcoming events, click on the advocacy or local tab. With the help of food allergy advocates nationwide, we’ve succeeded in increasing federal funding for food allergy research and improved food labels. Help spread the word about FAI Chicago to food-allergic families all over the Chicagoland area.</p>
<p>Is my gift tax-deductible?</p>	<p>Yes. FAI is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All gifts are tax deductible in accordance with tax law provisions.</p>