



"Especially with pastries, textures are a huge priority in a pastry. If your thing's too crumbly, then it sucks automatically. If your cookie falls apart as you grab it, it's not that great. And eggs being a binder in pastries is such an important thing. It's just not super easy to recreate that texture without eggs," DOMINIC SO '27 said. *art by mollyann caulfield*

When NICOLE SO '29 has birthday parties, she had cake for her guests. "I got to blow out the candles, and then they started cutting cake, and everybody else got a piece, but I can't eat that, despite it being my cake, because it had wheat, so I just had to eat my mom's cupcakes, which don't look as good as that cake," So said. *art by mollyann caulfield*



Two siblings on campus have experience with allergies and food restrictions, both individually or combined.

Wost people do not think about how many different kinds of food they can eat without worrying about dying. DOMINIC SO 's '27 palette, however, is extremely limited. He has six food allergies: wheat, eggs, fish, oats, tree nuts, and peanuts. He can be around them, but if he eats them, he goes into anaphylactic shock.

"If that place where they're preparing the food comes in contact with any of the allergies, there's risk for contamination, which is 90% of the time how I end up going into an allergic reaction," So said. "Because of that, I just try to avoid taking that risk entirely."

For So, one of the aspects of his life that is impacted the most is traveling. When traveling, he cannot just make his food in his kitchen at home. For this reason, depending on the duration of the trip, he often brings his own food in his suitcase.

"The number one priority when traveling, with as many allergies as I have: One bringing food, two having a place to store that food, like a fridge, so that the food doesn't go bad throughout the trip, and three having a way to reheat it. The third one is, I guess, optional," So said.

When So does eat out, he often does it from the same places to be sure of the contents of the food. Nevertheless, this is not always a foolproof plan. For instance, So had a major allergy scare at a wedding in Hawaii when he was in the third grade. The kitchen was made aware of his many allergies, but there is always a certain amount of risk. So started feeling uncomfortable after he ate veggie rolls that the venue provided for him. He had to take allergy medication and go back to his hotel room. He started feeling really cold, even though the temperature in the room was normal. He eventually was injected with an EpiPen and taken to the hospital in an ambulance.

"I remember he ejected like four different things into

both of my arms. And I remember staring at all the fluids just rocking back and forth in the ambulance ride. And then I watch the fluid enter my body, and suddenly everything just goes cold. Like I can feel the cold fluid flowing through my body, if that makes sense. And then I basically passed out," So said.

So remembered waking up a couple of times briefly that day, but did not wake up fully again until the next morning. So is not the only one in his family with allergies. His parents gave his sister NICOLE SO '29 an allergy test as well since allergies can run in the family, and it turned out that she was allergic to milk and nuts. She has grown out of her allergies since, but one thing that she cannot grow out of is a condition called celiac disease.

“AND SUDDENLY JUST AFTER EATING THAT, MY WHOLE PERSPECTIVE CHANGES, LIKE WOW. THAT'S HOW THAT TASTES.”

"My situation's a bit weird. I just call it an allergy because it's easier to tell people so people instantly understand, even though technically it's celiac," Nicole So said.

Celiac is a condition in which Nicole So does not get an instant reaction like an allergy, but she can get stomach aches and permanently damage her gut if she eats too much gluten. This limits her ability to eat a variety of bread-related products and pastries. Luckily, there have been an increase in alternatives in recent

years.

"There's more gluten free options as it's become a bigger allergy and more people are aware of it. There's more companies that make gluten free stuff. My mom makes a lot of stuff for us, as well. It's either she cooks or we buy some processed thing. Like waffles every day, these gluten free waffles," Nicole So said.

Dominic So, having so many allergies, also really appreciates finding new alternatives to commonly consumed foods that he is allergic to. Unlike his sister, however, his reaction is so instantaneous that he does not know how food he is allergic to actually tastes. Finding accurate alternatives is often an eye-opening experience for him.

"They tend to be a little more expensive, and they tend to not taste as great. But eventually after trial and error, I find that one product, which allegedly, according to my parents, tastes exactly like the real thing," Dominic So said. "And suddenly just after eating that, my whole perspective changes, like wow. That's how that tastes."

Even though Dominic So is unable to eat a lot of foods, it does not necessarily affect his quality of life other than sometimes having to be careful. It is not worse, just different, and he cannot miss what he does not know. He actually finds his allergies an interesting part of himself that he can use as an icebreaker when meeting new people or a conversation topic when everyone else is busy eating at a restaurant.

"I recognize that I can't eat a lot of things. And I recognize that a lot of industries are probably closed off automatically because of that. But being born with my allergies, I never got to experience the other side, so I can't really feel sad for myself," Dominic So said. "I never got to experience what it was like to not have allergies. To a degree, it's become such an important part of my identity, but I'm comfortable with it."

AN NHAM '27 has a variety of uncommon allergies to various kinds of fruit. The one that impacts her life the most is peanuts, however. "Vietnamese food, I can't have that many stuff from a lot of Vietnamese food, I also used to love peanut butter, but I can't have peanut butter anymore. It's my fall off. There's more Vietnamese food out there. There's always more food to eat. I just eat foods around my allergies. I love ca kho, it's peak. it's caramelized cat fish. It's so good," Nham said. *art by mollyann caulfield*

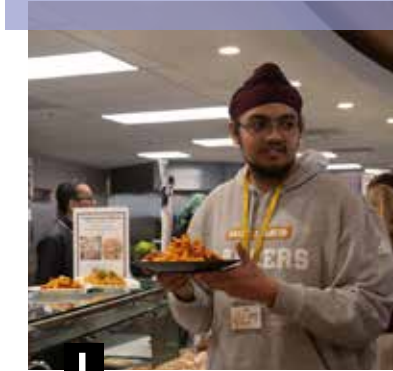


"When I went to Canada over the summer, there was this one really good pizza that I had. It actually tasted like pizza. And not cardboard. That's like a common trend. Like, a lot of bread kind of products taste like cardboard. I just know it was that good that, like, I basically ate three fourths of the pizza all by myself. Up to that point, I didn't know that those combinations of flavors and textures was even a possibility. And then once eating that, it basically unlocked a whole new perspective on pizza. And now, when I go home and I eat the pizza I've been eating way before, it tastes even worse. Which is unfortunate," DOMINIC SO '27 said. *art by mollyann caulfield*

1 Hello Herbivores In the cafeteria, DARSH SANDHU '28 turns to pay for his food. Sandhu's parents' religion is Sikhism, so they and Sandhu are vegetarian and he sometimes gets food from the vegetarian section of the cafeteria. "I feel like it's a good effort. I appreciate it, being inclusive," Sandhu said.

2 Creative Cuisines Reaching over the counter, BELLA GONZALEZ '29 takes a plate of sundried tomato pasta primavera from COLIN RAINES '21. The school has a vegetarian menu item every day so that more students can purchase lunch at the cafeteria. *photos by maya nagaraj*

BET WE HAVE A VEGETARIAN MENU.



1



2

bet we love HOME (OR SCHOOL?) COOKING

Our cafeteria offers a variety of options for food, but many students bring school from home as well. What were the reasoning behind people's choices?

41.1%
HOME

"I'm allergic to peanuts, tree nuts, sesame, egg, dairy; I can't eat foods made in a facility with nuts or sesame so it limits a lot of what I can eat. I also have IBS which eliminated a lot of foods on the food map so I really have to plan what I eat. I have to ask what is in baked goods all the time and just always be really careful and thoughtful of what I put in my body."

- CHLOE AMERICA '29

44.4%
SCHOOL

"I can't get some things at lunch because I am gluten free so I have to be careful."

- NELLIE CASSEL '27

13.2%
BOTH

"In accordance with my religious beliefs, I don't eat pork or beef. This has slightly affected me as a good portion of our lunch menu is meat that I can't eat."

- MYRA MALHOTRA '26

0.9%
NONE

"I can't eat a lot of stuff at school because I don't have nondairy options available and have to get food after school."

- LILLYANNE RODRIGUEZ '26

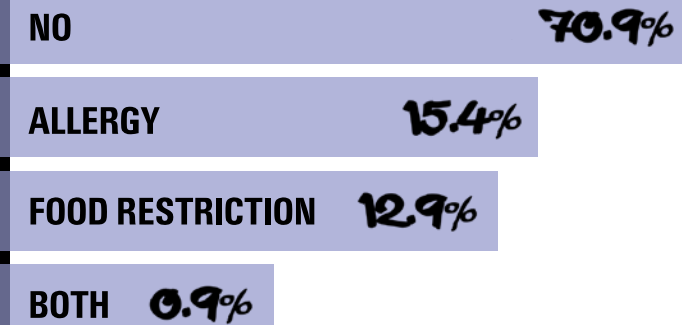
0.9%
OTHER

"Starbucks or Chipotle."

- KALEIGH HOUGHTON '29

know the sustenance STATS

A sample of 117 students were asked if they had allergies or some other kind of food restriction.



BET YOU didn't know

"I am left handed and when I do archery I need to shoot with a left handed bow."
- RYAN HANTS '29

"Something a lot of people don't know about me is that I used to play tennis."
- SOFIA KALAI '29

"People don't know that I started cheerleading when I was two years old."
- SOFIA RANDAZZO '27

"People don't know my middle name. Or my middle school I suppose."
- GREYSON BOND '27

"I know how to juggle."
- JOSHUA CADIGAL '26

"I play nine instruments."
- NATALIE CHANG '26

"People don't know that I make very good smoothies."
- ANNIE CARR '28

but now, we feel it
STUDENT LIFE / Allergies & Food Restrictions
ALLERGIES, FOOD-RELATED STATISTICS, HOME OR SCHOOL FOOD
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