

# The Days of Limitless “Allergies” Are Numbered

**WASHINGTON, DC** - Americans have always enjoyed the right to have a limitless numbers of allergies, but after new CMS guidelines were approved this week, all patients will be limited to a maximum of 3 allergies as of January 1, 2015.

“The allergy limitations have been long coming,” says FDA spokesman Bob Ranns.

“Many physicians had predicted a growing problem with our previous, unrestricted allergy system, and in fact we were seeing an increasing number of patients with ludicrously long allergy lists.

If you allow patients to state as many allergies as they want, the list will keep growing indefinitely.”



Allergy drop-down lists in electronic records systems have started to include grass, bad perfume, chocolate, exercise, and even employment. Anesthesiologist Dr. John Westen has had enough. “What’s next?” he asks. “Are we going to add our food preferences and an allergy to mushrooms if we don’t like them? How am I supposed to anesthetize patients who are allergic to carbon dioxide?” He added, “Can I be allergic to my mother-in-law?”

Physicians had complained about the time-consuming nature of sifting through allergy lists, so the new allergy regulations limit patients to the three most important allergies of their choice. Experts feel that this will focus doctors’ limited time on more serious allergies rather than meaningless adverse reactions.

Additionally, doctors will have more options when choosing medications for their patients, as there will be fewer allergies. This is particularly exciting to emergency medicine physicians, as patients will no longer be able to list allergies to all analgesics other than Dilaudid.

But not everyone is in agreement about limiting allergies. The most vocal opponents have been [gluten-free](#), non-celiac-disease celebrities. Tom Cruise

passionately believes he has the right to have as many allergies as he wants. His allergy list currently contains 387 allergies, and he adds more regularly. “Just last week I ate a burrito at [Chipotle](#) and I felt bloated,” he explains. He also describes an incident of flushing and tachycardia when running, which is why exercise is number 244 on his allergy list.

The Federal Institute of Allergies and Adverse Reactions provides the following simple guide to choosing your 3 allergies:

1. Write down the medications or foods that have previously caused you a near-death reaction and for which you carry an [EpiPen](#).
2. If there are more than 3 items in that list, choose the ones you encounter more often.
3. Avoid situations where you might have encountered your previous allergies so you won't feel constrained by the allergy limit (hospitals, outdoors, restaurants).

“Allergy restrictions are a step in the right direction,” says Ranns, “but it’s just the beginning.” Expected to pass in the next legislation is a home medication limit, as well as a medical condition restriction. Ranns assures the public that “we are on our way to great progress.”