

# Newsweek

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## **KIDS** AND THE GROWING **FOOD** **ALLERGY** **THREAT**



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY NICKI PARRY

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# Food Allergy in the United States

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- **6-8% of children under age 4; 4% of adults**
- **Estimated 30,000 anaphylactic episodes per year**
- **Approximately 150 deaths per year**
- **Peanut allergy is the most common cause of fatal/near-fatal anaphylaxis**
- **Some food allergies persist throughout life**

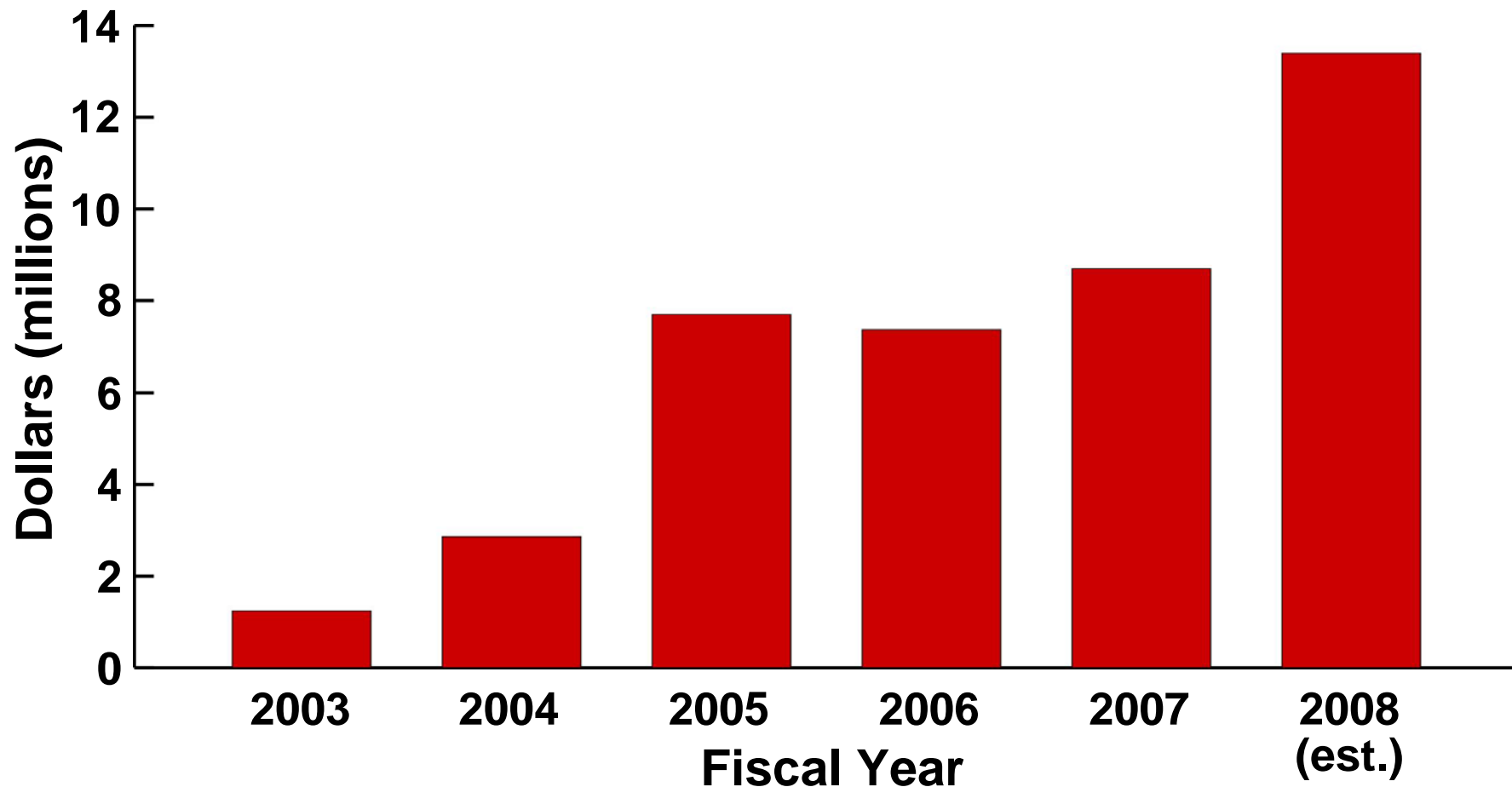
# Treatment and Prevention of Food Allergy

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- **Few treatment options (e.g. antihistamines, epinephrine)**
- **Severe reactions require epinephrine, IV fluids and other agents**
- **Allergen avoidance is the only prevention approach; accidental exposure is common**

# NIAID Funding for Food Allergy Research

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■ FY 2007 funding for basic immunology and allergy research totaled more than \$500 million

# NIAID Research on Food Allergy

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- **Basis research on immunology and allergic mechanisms**
- **Epidemiological studies**
- **Pre-clinical and clinical research**
  - **Pilot trials of oral, sublingual, and mucosal therapy in egg- and peanut-allergic subjects**
  - **Trial of high-dose peanut vs. peanut avoidance in high risk infants**

# Exploratory Investigations in Food Allergy

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- **FY2008 Initiative (\$3.5 million)**
- **Objectives:**
  - Support mechanistic studies of food allergies
  - Attract new investigators to the field
- **Partnership with EPA, Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network, and Food Allergy Project**

# Guidelines for the Diagnosis and Treatment of Food Allergy

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- **Development of guidelines to be coordinated by NIAID starting in July 2008**
- **Anticipated to involve >20 professional societies, advocacy groups, and NIH Institutes and Centers**