



## Anaphylaxis Policy

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life-threatening reaction to an allergen (a substance that causes allergy). Reactions are often rapid, occurring within seconds of exposure, and in some cases to only microscopic amounts of the allergen.

Peanut products are by far the most common allergens causing anaphylaxis. Peanut butter presents particular challenges in terms of cleanliness and cross-contamination. Examples of other life-threatening allergens are:

- foods, e.g. eggs, fish, milk nut products
- insect stings
- drugs e.g. penicillin
- latex

Ensuring the safety of anaphylactic children in a school setting depends on the cooperation of the entire school community. To minimize the risk of exposure, and to ensure rapid response to emergency, parents, students, and school personnel must all understand and fulfill their responsibilities. For efficient retrieval, the school requires that each student in Grades 1 to 7 who necessitates the use of an injection kit **must carry an up-to-date injection kit on his/her body at all times**. This is accomplished through the use of a “fanny-pack” or injection kit pack that straps to the child’s waist, belt or belt loop. A second injection kit will also be provided to the school office for back up. Kindergarten students who require the use of an injection kit will also provide 2 injection kits to the school; one to the school office, and one that will be supervised by the classroom teacher. **Kindergarten students are not required to carry their injection kit on their body. It will be supervised and stored by the classroom teacher.**

### **Responsibilities of the Parents of an Anaphylactic Child:**

- Inform the school of their child’s allergies.
- Provide a medic alert bracelet for their child.
- Provide the school with physician’s instructions for administering medication.
- Provide the school with 2 up-to-date injection kits, and keep them current; one to keep in the office, and one for the child to carry at all times. (Gr. 1-7)
- Provide the child with an injection kit pack to carry at all times. (Gr. 1-7)
- Provide support to school and teachers as requested.
- Provide permission to post photographs and medical information in key locations such as the classroom, staff room, nurse’s room, etc.
- Participate in parent support groups.
- Assist in school communication plans.
- Review the school action plan with school personnel.



- Help supply information for school publications such as:
  - recipes;
  - foods to avoid;
  - alternate snack suggestions; and resources
- When possible, provide approval of and permission for all foods eaten outside the home. Alternative treats for occasions when parents are unable to give approval should be supplied by the family of the student to replace foods involved in an event if needed. These items should be labeled with the student's name and class and may be stored in the school.
- For Parish/Community/School functions occurring outside of school hours, parents are responsible for the communication related to food if their children are attending. Alternative food may need to be provided.

Teach their child:

- to recognize the first symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction;
- to know where the medication is kept, and who can get it;
- to communicate clearly when he/she feels a reaction starting;
- to carry his/her own auto-injector in a fanny-pack;
- not to share snacks, lunches or drinks
- to cope with teasing and being left out;
- to report bullying and threats to an adult in authority; and
- to take as much responsibility as possible his/her own safety.

Welcome other parents' calls with questions about safe foods.

## **Responsibilities of the School Principal**

- Work as closely as possible with the parents of the anaphylactic child.
- Ensure that the parents have completed all necessary forms.
- Ensure the instructions from the child's physician are on file.
- Notify the school community at the beginning of the school year of the anaphylactic child, the allergens, and the treatment.
- Post allergy-alert forms in the staff room and office.
- Maintain up-to-date emergency contacts and telephone numbers.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers have annually received instruction with the auto-injector.
- Ensure that all substitute teachers are informed of the presence of an anaphylactic child, and have been adequately trained to deal with an emergency.
- Inform all parents that a child with life-threatening allergies is attending the class/school, and ask their support.
- Arrange for an annual in-service.
- Develop a school policy for reducing risk in classrooms and common areas.
- Establish a disciplinary procedure for dealing with bullying and threats.



## **Responsibilities of the Classroom Teacher**

- Display a photo/poster in the classroom, with parent approval.
- Discuss anaphylaxis with the class, in age-appropriate terms.
- Encourage students not to share lunches, trade snacks, utensils, or containers.
- Choose allergy-free foods for classroom events.
- Notify the parent of the anaphylactic child at least 24 hrs prior to a school event (when possible/practical) where outside food will be consumed, so that the parent may have the opportunity to come in and approve any outside food.
- When parent approval is not possible/practical, only pre-approved food that is kept at school may be given.
- Encourage the anaphylactic child to take mealtime precautions such as:
  - placing food on wax paper or napkin rather than on desk or table;
  - taking only one item at a time from the lunch bag to prevent others from touching food;
  - packing up their lunch and leaving it with lunch supervisors, if it is necessary to leave the room during lunchtime.
- Establish procedures to ensure that the anaphylactic child eats only what he/she brings from home.
- Establish at least one common eating area, or a section, that is “allergen-aware”.
- Refrain from having anaphylactic child involved with garbage disposal, yard clean-ups, or other activities which would bring them into contact with food wrappers, containers, or debris.
- Allow the child to keep the same desk all year.
- Reinforce hand-washing before and after eating.
- Facilitate communication with other parents.
- Follow the school policies for reducing risk in classrooms and common areas.
- Enforce school rules about bullying and threats.
- Leave information in an organized, prominent, accessible and highly visible format for substitute teachers. If it is not posted in the classroom, it should be in the teacher’s daybook.

## **Responsibilities of the Public Health/School Nurse**

- Consult with and provide information to parents, students and school personnel.
- Participate in planning school policy.
- Participate in in-service and auto-injector training.
- Assist in developing emergency response plans.
- Refer known cases of anaphylaxis to the school principal.



## **Responsibilities of Anaphylactic Students**

- Take as much responsibility as possible in avoiding allergens.
- Eat only foods brought from home.
- Take responsibility for checking labels and monitoring intake (older students).
- Wash hands before/after eating.
- Learn to recognize symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as symptoms appear.
- Carry an auto-injector on his/her body at all times. (Gr. 1 to 7)
- Know how to use the auto-injector.

## **Responsibilities of All Parents**

- Do not send peanut or nut containing foods to school for snacks or lunches.
- Home-made items that are brought to school should be prepared without peanut or nut ingredients, and with steps to avoid cross contamination with peanuts or nuts. This includes baking on clean surfaces with clean baking equipment, and keeping all peanut or nut products stored away from the baking area and baked items.
- Provide a list of all ingredients of foods prepared at home that are brought to the class of an anaphylactic child.
- Participate in parent information sessions.
- Encourage children to respect anaphylactic children and school policies.
- Bring concerns about controlling the contents of school lunches and snacks to the principal, not to the parents of the anaphylactic child.

## **Responsibilities of All Students**

- Learn to recognize symptoms of anaphylactic reaction.
- Avoid sharing food, especially with anaphylactic children.
- Follow school rules about keeping allergens out of the classroom.
- Follow school rules about washing hands.
- Refrain from “bullying” or “teasing” a child with a food allergy.