

**STUDENTS WITH SEVERE (ANAPHYLACTIC) ALLERGIES**

**Background**

The Division believes it is important to provide safe and caring environments for all students and therefore recognizes the responsibility to take precautionary measures that reduce the risk of severe allergic (anaphylactic) response. Anaphylactic response is life-threatening and requires immediate medical attention.

While preventing severe allergic response is the goal, it is important to prepare for the possibility of an emergency due to the inability to control all the potential risk factors. Reducing risk and responding appropriately in the case of an emergency requires cooperation and communication among the parents (guardians), student (as appropriate) and the school. The care and supervision of younger (elementary) children will differ from the care and supervision of older (junior and senior high) students who can be expected to accept more responsibility for their own well-being.

It is important to realize that students with anaphylactic response benefit from normal peer interactions and that risk reduction occurs best through a cooperative approach that does not unreasonably, or unnecessarily restrict the activities of other students. Nevertheless, principals may limit foods and/or other substances from the classroom, specific areas within the school, or the bus in order to minimize risks of anaphylactic response. In exercising this judgment which may severely restrict the activities and choices of other students, the principal will consider other reasonable alternatives based on the maturity of the student and medical information provided by the student's doctor.

**DEFINITIONS**

In this procedure:

1. "allergen" means a substance which provokes an allergic response and includes bee or wasp venom, certain foods, latex and other chemicals;
2. "injector" means a syringe and needle which contain a pre-measured dose of epinephrine or adrenaline and includes EpiPens and other pre-loaded auto injectors;
3. "parent" means a parent or guardian as defined in the School Act or other relevant legislation
4. "severe allergy" means an anaphylactic or life-threatening response to an allergen which, if left untreated, can lead to sudden death.

## PROCEDURES

### A. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

The principal is responsible for planning the coordination and management of risk reduction and emergency response procedures. To manage risk reduction, the principal needs to educate the school community about anaphylaxis and the need for a cooperative approach in minimizing risks for children with severe allergic response. It is appropriate to include information about anaphylaxis and the school's expectations in the Student Handbook.

Further, the principal will ensure regular, appropriate training opportunities so staff can identify and minimize risks, recognize severe allergic reaction, and provide appropriate emergency response when needed.

When parents or guardians or students identify a risk for severe allergy response and/or anaphylaxis, the principal is responsible to advise the parents/guardians and student (if age 16 or over) of the following:

1. The school must be provided with a physician's note (**Form 317-1 Physician Information Form for Anaphylaxis**) outlining the risk factors and treatment protocol in case of an emergency.
2. The student is to carry or wear the prescribed medical treatment, such as an EpiPen at all times. The school may require additional medication such as an EpiPen to be appropriately stored for use in an emergency on site, or on a field trip. (**Form 317-2 Parental Consent to Give Medical Treatment**)
3. The student is to wear a medical alert bracelet or other suitable identification at all times when participating in a school sponsored event.
4. The emergency contact information is to be current and include alternative individuals and contact information who can respond if a parent/guardian is unavailable. Changes to any of this information are to be reported immediately to the school.
5. The Parents and student are expected to participate in the development of an individual Student Care Plan which will address at least the following:
  - Identification of the risk factors and steps the school will take to reasonably reduce risk
  - Appropriate storage and location of medication i.e., injectors and procedures for replacement prior to expiry dates
  - Appropriate emergency response
  - Communication protocols (who needs to know the information, how will it be communicated, who will be contacted in an emergency)
  - Off-campus, off-site, and lunch program procedures (establish an eating area that reduces a student's risk of exposure to food allergens that may be present as a result of other children's food choices)
  - In the case of food allergies, parents/guardians are to provide for all foods and beverages that the student will consume during school or school related events
  - Specify the age appropriate responsibility of students in managing their own care (e.g. young children will eat only what is provided by their parents and will not accept food from others)
6. All individuals (staff, bus drivers, volunteers, and others) who have responsibility for the care and safety of the student have a right to access all relevant information that reduces risk factors and provides for appropriate responses in the case of an emergency.

### B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS

Teachers have a responsibility to minimize the risks for students with severe, life-threatening allergies, recognize allergy reaction and appropriately respond to an emergency. To that end, teachers will:

1. Participate with the parents/ guardians and principal in developing the Student Care Plan.
2. Build understanding of anaphylaxis among the students and identify ways of cooperating to minimize risks.
3. Encourage students not to share or trade food, to wash hands before and after eating, and to avoid cross contamination by keeping a barrier between the food and the eating surface.

4. Encourage the student with severe food allergies to eat only what is provided or approved by their parent/guardian.
5. Avoid allergenic foods and substances for classroom events.
6. Leave the Student's Care Plan in an organized, prominent and accessible format for substitute teachers. Share information appropriately with other adults who have responsibility for the student's care – volunteers, for example.
7. Know the school's emergency response protocol.
8. Ensure that the emergency response protocol and appropriate medication is taken to off-site activities
9. Facilitate communication that promotes cooperation among parents, students and school.
10. Encourage an empathic understanding of severe allergies and the seriousness of the consequences.
11. Advise students of their responsibility to inform staff when accidental ingestion or exposure to an allergenic occurs or symptoms of allergic reaction appear.

Reference: Section 18, 20, 45, 60, 61, School Act  
Emergency Medical Aid Act