

NORTH TOM PRICE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

Definition

Allergy occurs when a person's immune system reacts to substances in the environment that do not bother most people. These substances are known as allergens.

Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and is potentially life-threatening. Anaphylaxis affects the entire body.

Anaphylaxis must be treated as a medical emergency, requiring immediate treatment.

Students, under adult guidance, should avoid the foods which may trigger a severe allergic reaction. Teachers and students should not offer a student with a food allergy any food that has not been approved by their parents.

Common Allergens

- Food – most commonly peanuts, tree nuts, seeds, fish and crustaceans, milk, soy, eggs or wheat.
- Medication – painkillers and antibiotics
- Insect stings – bees, ants and wasps
- Tick bites
- Latex allergy

Symptoms

Symptoms can begin *within minutes* of exposure and can *progress rapidly*. Many of these symptoms may appear at any one time and include:

- Itching or irritation in the mouth and rash around the mouth
- Rash, hives or welts spreading quickly over the body
- Throat constriction, hoarse voice, and/or continuous cough
- Rapidly swelling of the face, especially the eyelids, difficulty talking and swallowing
- Vomiting
- Breathing difficulty caused by swelling of the tongue or throat, wheezing or asthma
- Acute distress, looking pale, anxious and agitated
- Light-headedness or collapse, becoming wake or floppy, may feel faint or lose consciousness

Emergency Management

- All children identified as having anaphylaxis will have an individual action plan
- Action plans and photos will be displayed in the staffroom, office, classrooms and in duty bags
- These plans will be updated every 12 months
- All medication will be stored in a labelled cupboard in the Deputy office, or in the Kindergarten / Pre-Primary, if appropriate
- Staff will follow emergency management steps as listed in the Action Plan.

Roles and Responsibilities

Principal

- Schools acknowledge a duty of care to provide a safe and supportive environment which addresses, to the extent possible, reduction of the risks of exposure to known allergens. This includes ensuring that the health care needs of the student are identified and managed at the school and during off-site activities.
- When students are enrolled, Principals will undertake health care planning with parents and school staff to identify the student's current health care needs. Information from the child's medical

practitioner is an important part of planning and may need to include any changes in the condition from previous planning.

- A Health Care Authorisation will be developed by the Principal in consultation with parent/carers and implemented for the student. It will include specialist medical advice and a medical emergency plan as required. The health care Authorisation should be reviewed after any emergency response or at least annually.
- A communication and preventative education strategy needs to be developed in collaboration with the child's parents to inform the student's peers, other staff and members of the school community of the medical condition and possible impacts of the condition.
- Staff need to be advised as to how to address the possible negative impacts of social or emotional responses of other students to a child with severe allergic reactions. This may include teasing, bullying or daring a student to take health risks.
- The principal needs to inform all teaching and non-teaching staff that a child with severe allergic reactions and possible anaphylaxis is attending their school. This includes canteen staff where the triggers are food. Staff should be advised of the need for vigilant but discreet supervision.
- The principal needs to ensure that teaching and non-teaching staff are provided with appropriate training to administer health care in a medical emergency. This includes administration of an EpiPen. Staff are able to indicate to a principal that they are not confident to administer health care or medical procedures and may decline to participate in training opportunities.

Parents/ Caregivers

- Parents/carers are responsible for the provision of accurate, up to date health information about their child, an EpiPen if required and for ensuring that medication has not expired.
- Parents/carers should be encouraged to give permission to post photographs and medical information in key locations, such as classroom, duty bags, staffroom, administration area.

Students

- The child with the allergies, as well as their peers should be given age appropriate education about their allergy.

Minimising the Risks

- Parents providing safe snacks and treats to enable the child with allergies to participate in birthday parties and curriculum related activities at school.
- Parents providing drink containers and lunch boxes which are clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended.
- Restricting the use of food in crafts, cooking classes and science experiments, depending on the allergies of particular children. Taking care with inadvertent use of artwork materials such as milk containers, egg cartons, nutshells and eggshells.
- Instructing personnel involved in food preparation about measures necessary to prevent cross contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food. This includes the need for careful cleaning of food preparation areas and utensils when preparing allergenic foods.
- Ensuring regular hand washing and cleaning of bench tops. The risk of a life threatening anaphylaxis from casual skin contact, even with highly allergenic foods such as peanuts appears to be very low. However, such contact can cause hives.
- Ensuring extra vigilance when there is a change from usual routines e.g. excursions, special preschool or school days, camps and sports carnivals.
- Teachers being aware of the possibility of contaminated surfaces, books and equipment or toys that may have been used by other students.
- Ensuring there is **no trading or sharing of food**.

- Becoming an **allergy friendly school** through developing and promoting school policies and practices that address matters such as food availability and reducing exposure to triggers or known risk factors.
- Lunches are eaten in a specified area which is supervised by teachers.
- Parents of classmates may be asked not to send foods containing peanut butter to school if a class member in Kindergarten or Pre primary has peanut allergy