

INTRODUCTION

Food allergies are presenting increasing challenges for schools. Because of the life-threatening nature of these allergies and their increasing prevalence, school districts and individual schools need to be prepared to address the needs of students with food allergies.

Protecting a student from exposure to offending allergens is the most important way to prevent life-threatening anaphylaxis. Most anaphylactic reactions occur when a child is accidentally exposed to a substance to which he/she is allergic, such as foods, medicines, insects, and latex. Avoidance is the key to preventing a reaction.

School is a high-risk setting for accidental ingestion of a food allergen, due to such factors as the large number of students, increased exposure of the food allergic student to food allergens, as well as cross-contamination of tables, desks, computers, the LRC's, sports equipment, and other surfaces. Other high-risk areas and activities for the student with food allergies include: the cafeteria, food sharing, hidden ingredients, craft, art, and science projects, bus transportation, fundraisers, bake sales, parties and holiday celebrations, field trips, and substitute teaching staff being unaware of the food allergic student.

Ingestion of the food allergen is the principal route of exposure; however, it is possible for a student to react to tactile (touch) exposure or, in rare cases, inhalation exposure. The amount of food needed to trigger a reaction depends on multiple variables. Consumption of as little as one five-thousandth of a teaspoon of an allergenic food can cause death. Each food allergic person's level of sensitivity may fluctuate over time. Because there is a cumulative effect from past exposures to an allergen, the severity of a future exposure cannot be predicted. Every food allergy reaction has the possibility of developing into a life-threatening and potentially fatal anaphylactic reaction. Some reactions occur within minutes of contact or ingestion to the allergens; others come on as a surprise hours later. The symptoms of a food allergy reaction are specific to each individual.

- Eight foods (peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish) account for 90% of total food allergies.
- Peanut and tree nuts account for 92% of severe and fatal reactions, along with fish and shellfish. Tree nuts are cashews, pistachios, walnuts, hazelnuts, etc.
- The student with an undiagnosed food allergy may experience his/her first food allergy reaction at school.
- Bee/insect stings, as well as medications and latex, have the potential of causing a life-threatening allergic reaction as well. We need to be equally vigilant in our management of these allergic reactions as well.

We will require medical confirmation of all known allergies.

Many students with food allergies who have experienced a life-threatening (anaphylactic) reaction may be aware of their own mortality. The emotional, as well as the physical, needs of the child must be respected. Children with food allergies are at-risk for eating disorders or teasing. School social workers are available to work with families when teasing concerns are indicated.

Nut Free Rooms

Woodland will provide nut-free classrooms for all students in kindergarten through 5th grade with a documented life-threatening allergy. This means that all students in these designated nut-free classrooms will not be permitted to have present or eat any foods containing nut products at any time during the day (lunch, snacks, etc.).

Nut free means that no peanut or nut tree products will be allowed at any time in that room. Tree nuts include cashews, pistachios, walnuts, almonds, etc. This prohibition includes lunches, snacks, birthday and party treats.

Letters will be sent to all parents of students in these nut-free classrooms weeks prior to the start of school explaining that no nut products will be allowed in this class for lunch, snack, etc. This gives parents of non-allergic students an opportunity to request their child be moved out of this class if they feel it would be difficult to comply.

Individual Health Care Plan

An Individual Health Care Plan puts in writing what the school can do to accommodate the individual needs of a child with a life-threatening allergy. Prior to the start of school or immediately after the diagnosis of a life-threatening allergic condition with medical confirmation, the parent/guardian should meet with the school nurse and administration to develop an individualized health care plan.

This plan details the preventative and emergency procedures to be taken to help protect and treat a student with life-threatening allergies.

The next several pages are intended to serve as a guide to outline the range of responsibilities District #50 staff can have concerning a child with a life threatening allergy.

School Administration

School Administrators will oversee the school team in the prevention, care, and management of children with food allergies and reactions. Administrators will consider the following when addressing the needs of a student with a life-threatening allergy:

- Development of an Individual Health Care Plan
- Provision of training and education for all necessary staff regarding:
 - Allergies, insect stings, medications, latex, etc.
 - How to administer an EpiPen in an emergency
 - How to recognize symptoms of anaphylaxis
- Provision of emergency communication devices (i.e. walkie talkies, cell phones) for all school activities, including gym, lunch recess and transportation that involve a student with life-threatening allergies.
- Arrange for an allergy free table in the lunchroom and/or provide an allergy free lunch substitute as needed.
- Have hand sanitizers or wipes for student use in the lunchroom and classroom.
- Have the custodian wash doorknobs, tables, desks, and other potentially contaminated surfaces with separate cloth to avoid cross contamination when cleaning the classroom, as needed.
- Plan for student transitions each spring for the next school year. This may be a transition to the next grade or after kindergarten, 3rd and 5th grade since it will be a transition to a new school.

Transition:

- 1) The sending school will notify receiving school of students with life threatening allergies
- 2) A letter will be sent to all students in the allergen free room before the start of school
- 3) School Nurses will transition care plans as students move to new school
- 4) A meeting with receiving administrator and school nurse will be held as needed
- 5) Students with life threatening allergies will be grouped in clusters whenever possible.

School Nurse/Health Assistant

Nurses and Health Assistants will participate as a member of the school team in both the prevention and emergency care of children with food allergies and reactions. Nurses will consider the following when developing an Individual Health Care Plan for a student with a life-threatening allergy.

- Schedule and participate in the meeting to develop an Individual Health Care Plan for the student.
- Conduct and monitor attendance at in-service training for all staff that work with students with life-threatening allergies child at the beginning of the school year.
- In the nurse's office post and label location of Individual Health Care Plans and emergency medication *e.g.* EpiPen.
- Periodically check medications for expiration dates and arrange for them to be current.
- Be able to communicate with playground staff and physical education teacher via communication device (e.g.: walkie talkie, cell phone).
- Check food labels as needed.
- Refer to the School Food Allergy Program available in the health office, for any additional information, as needed.

Teachers and all Support Staff

Staff will need to consider the following as they work with the team to develop an Individual Health Care Plan for a student with a life-threatening allergy.

- Be trained regarding life-threatening allergies including:
 - Basic facts regarding life-threatening allergies
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions
 - Use of the EpiPen
- At kindergarten, a health concern sticker should be placed on the back of the student's nametag, which they wear at all times.
- Participate in any team meetings for the student with life-threatening allergies and attend all necessary in-service training.
- Keep accessible the student's Individual Health Care Plan with photo in classroom.
- Keep medical alert list close at hand
- Be sure both student teacher and any classroom volunteers are informed of the student's food allergies
- Leave information for substitute teachers in an organized, **prominent**, and accessible format for substitute teachers. Follow school guidelines for subfolders, including an emergency guide card.
- Inform parents of the child with allergies in advance of any in class events where food will be served.
- Follow Health Care Plan in the case of an emergency.
- Periodically check hand sanitizers to be sure they are full.
- Encourage students to use sanitizer or wash hands when arriving to school.
- Maintain a supply of lanolin free wipes to wipe down flat surfaces as needed.
- Check lunches and snacks everyday for the first two weeks and then periodically to insure the lunches/snacks are allergen free.
- Check birthday or party treats prior to eating.

Snacks/Lunch Time

- If staff discover unknown or restricted food:
 - Rid the classroom of the food and
 - Wipe down flat surfaces in the classroom and
 - Refer to the students Individual Health Plan for further action

- If contamination of foods is suspected, have the students wipe down their own individual desk with wet wipes.
- Reinforce proper hand washing before and after eating.

Classroom Activities

- Consider the presence of allergenic foods in classroom activities (*e.g.*, arts and crafts, science projects, and celebrations, or other projects). Modify class materials as needed.
- If a food event has been held in a classroom(s) where there is a child with an allergy, have the custodian wash the tables and chairs using appropriate materials to avoid cross contamination.
- Try not to isolate or exclude a child because of allergies *e.g.* using candy as part of a math lesson.
- Monitor snacks/lunches brought by students.
- Send home to all parents at the beginning of the year the following:
 - Basic facts regarding life-threatening allergies
 - Appropriate snack list
 - Alternative to snacks
- Encourage the use of stickers, pencils, or other non-food items as rewards or in party goody bags instead of food.
- Encourage non-edibles at Holiday parties
- If an animal is invited to the classroom, special attention must be paid to other allergies children may have (*e.g.* dander) and to the animal's food (peanuts, soy milk).

Field Trips

- Consider the student when planning a field trip due to a risk of allergen exposure.
- Collaborate with the school nurse prior to planning a field trip. Ensure EpiPen and any other required medications are taken on field trips.
- Consider eating situations on field trips and plan for prevention of exposure to the student's life-threatening foods.
- Invite parents of student at risk for anaphylaxis to accompany their child on school trips, in addition to the chaperone(s). However, the parent's presence at a field trip is not required.
- Consider ways to wash hands before and after eating (*e.g.* provision of hand wipes, etc.).
- Identify one staff member who will be assigned the task of watching out for the student's welfare and handling any emergency.
- Plan for the availability of a communication device.

Substitute Teachers

- Be trained regarding life-threatening allergies including:
 - Basic facts regarding life-threatening allergies
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions
 - Use of the EpiPen
- Make sure that a brightly colored sticker is attached to the substitute folder, alerting the substitute that a child in the classroom has a life-threatening allergy.
- Include the following statement in the sub folder, "If this is your first-time in this classroom, and you are unfamiliar with the use of an EpiPen, please contact the school nurse prior to the arrival of students.
- Do not eat or store your lunch in the classroom if you have allergenic food products in your lunch.

Coaches and Supervisors of District Before/After School Programs

- Be trained regarding life-threatening allergies including:
 - Basic facts regarding life-threatening allergies
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions
 - Use of the EpiPen
- Review medical alert lists for students with medical needs participating in the activity you are supervising.
- Review the Individual Health Care Plan with the school nurse.
- Make certain that an emergency communication device (*e.g.* walkie-talkie, intercom, cell phone, *etc.*) is always present.
- If you suspect an allergic reaction administer EpiPen and any other medications then call 911.
- Clearly identify who is responsible for keeping the EpiPen and emergency medication and where it will be kept.
- Consider the presence of allergenic foods in classroom activities (*e.g.*, arts and crafts, and celebrations, or other projects). Modify class materials as needed.

Recess/Lunch Room Monitors

- Be trained regarding life-threatening allergies including:
 - Basic facts regarding life-threatening allergies
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions
 - Use of the EpiPen
- Take all complaints seriously from any student with a life-threatening allergy by immediately contacting the school nurse.
- Keep medical alert list handy
- Encourage proper hand washing or use of hand sanitizer for students after eating.
- Thoroughly clean all tables and chairs after lunch.
- Reinforce that only children with “safe lunches” eat at the allergy free table.
- Adult supervisors may be asked to hold an EpiPen for a child. Consider using a fanny pack or have a central location for easy access.
- Post pictures of students with life-threatening allergies per the Health Care Plan.
- Familiarize yourself with the Health Care Plans of students with Health Care Plans.
- Check lunches at nut free table daily.

Custodians

- Be trained regarding life-threatening allergies including:
 - Basic facts regarding life-threatening allergies
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions
 - Use of the EpiPen
- Thoroughly clean all tables and chairs after lunch. Be sure hand sanitizers are filled at all times.
- Be familiar with pictures of students with life threatening allergies.
- Thoroughly clean tables and flat surfaces after use of the schools by outside organizations.

Transportation Staff

- Be trained regarding life-threatening allergies including:
 - Basic facts regarding life-threatening allergies
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions
 - Use of the EpiPen
- Maintain policy of no food eating allowed on school buses.
- Bus drivers should have and review the medical alert lists
- Bus drivers should have a photograph of the student(s) with life-threatening allergies.
- If an allergic reaction is suspected the driver should pull over to a safe place, administer the EpiPen and call 911
- Inform parents of students with life threatening allergies that their child can sit in the front of the bus if they wish.

Food Service Staff

Parents or students may have access to reading food labels to identify the ingredients in the products used by the school's food service provider. **It is ultimately the responsibility of the parent to decide whether the child will participate in the district's hot lunch program or brings a lunch to school.**

- Be trained regarding life-threatening allergies including:
 - Basic facts regarding life-threatening allergies
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions
- If requested meet with parent to discuss student's allergy.
- Maintain contact information for manufacturers of food products. (Consumer Hotline).
- Follow cleaning and sanitation protocol to prevent cross-contamination.
- Create specific kitchen areas that will be allergen safe *e.g.* allergen-free prep tables, fryers.
- Make appropriate substitutions or modifications for meals served to students with food allergies.
- Make available advanced copies of the menu to parents/guardian when requested.
- When necessary avoid the use of latex gloves by food service personnel. Order non-latex gloves instead.
- Provide information about reading product food labels and food allergens as needed.

The lunch cards should be identified with any food allergies and a note that a substitute lunch needed for **any** student in a nut free room must be allergen free.

Parents/Guardians

We ask parents to assist the school in the prevention, care, and management of their child's food allergies and reactions. To achieve this goal, parents are asked to follow these guidelines:

- Inform the school nurse in writing of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or immediately after a diagnosis) by providing the following:
 - Completed medication authorization from a licensed physician
 - Medical confirmation of allergy
 - Up-to-date EpiPens and other necessary medication(s)
- Participate in developing an Individual Health Care Plan.
- While the school will not exclude an allergic student from a field trip, a parent may choose to do so. Be willing to go on your child's field trips if requested.

It is important that children take increased responsibility for their allergies as they grow older and as they become developmentally ready. Consider teaching your child to:

- Understand the seriousness of their allergies
- Recognize the first symptoms of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction
- Notify an adult immediately when they are having a reaction.
- Carry his/her own EpiPen when appropriate (or know where the EpiPen is kept), and be trained in how to administer his/her own EpiPen, when this is an age-appropriate task.
- Recognize safe and unsafe foods
- Do not share snacks, lunches, or drinks.
- Encourage the habit of reading ingredient labels before eating food when this is an age appropriate task.
- Understand the importance of proper hand washing before and after eating.
- Inform others of your allergy and specific needs.

Suggestions:

- Provide a Medic Alert bracelet or necklace for your child.

Transition:

- Participate in a meeting with administration and nurse of receiving school near the end of school (kindergarten, 3rd grade and 5th grade) to plan for transition to the new school.
- Review Individual Health Care Plan at least annually or as needed

Students

Students with life-threatening allergies are asked to follow these guidelines.

- Do not trade or share foods.
- Wash hands or use hand wipes before and after eating.
- Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction
- Notify an adult immediately if a reaction is suspected.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear.
- Develop a relationship with the school nurse and at least one other trusted adult in the school to assist in identifying issues related to the management of the allergy in school.
- Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients.
- Develop a habit of always reading ingredients before eating food (when age appropriate).
- If medically necessary, the student is responsible for carrying medication(s).
- If a Medic Alert bracelet/necklace is provided by the parent, the child is responsible for wearing the ID at all times.
- Empower the student to self-advocate in situations that they might perceive as compromising their health.

WOODLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT 50
INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLAN

Date _____

Student: _____ School _____

Teacher _____ Grade/Room _____

Parent/Guardian Name _____ Home Phone _____
Cell: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ Home Phone _____
Cell Phone _____

SUMMARY OF DIAGNOSIS/CONDITION: (Include a brief history of allergies, signs and symptoms of reactions and other relevant information)

EMERGENCY PLAN

- 1) Allergic to:
- 2) Who will administer EpiPen? (list 3) _____

- 3) Where will the EpiPen be stored?
- 4) Reaction Protocol
 - a) inject EpiPen
 - b) call 911
 - c) call parents
- 5) Classroom accommodations
- 6) Lunchroom/recess accommodations
- 7) Snack/ Party treats accommodations
- 8) Field Trip accommodations
- 9) Additional needs

Physician Signature _____
Print Doctor's Name _____

Date _____

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Cc: Nurse, Principal, Parent, Bus, Staff: teacher, gym, art, music, computer, lunch/recess, cafeteria

August 2007

Dear Parents,

This letter is to inform you that a student in your child's class has a severe food allergy to nut products. It is important that there is strict avoidance of any food containing nuts or nut products in order to prevent a life threatening allergic reaction. We are asking your help to provide the student with a safe school environment.

Any exposure to nuts or nut products may cause a life threatening allergic reaction requiring emergency medical treatment. To reduce this chance from occurring we are asking that you follow these guidelines:

- Do not send snacks or lunches containing any nuts or foods containing nut products to school with your son/daughter
- If your child has eaten nuts (e.g.: peanut butter) before coming to school please be sure that their hands and face have been thoroughly washed.
- If you send in treats for any holiday parties they must be nut free. Please check the ingredients to be sure the item contains no nuts or nut products and was not packaged in a plant where nuts are in use. Manufacturers are very good about noting this when necessary.
- Do not send any homemade treats for birthdays or parties.
- Strongly consider sending non-food items for birthdays and holiday treats.

We appreciate your assistance with this very serious matter and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Please feel free to call me at _____. If you wish to discuss your child's placement in this class feel free to call me as well.

Sincerely,

Principal

Life Threatening Allergies Training

Annual first aid training to include use of EpiPen

- A. Most common food allergies that account for 90% of all food allergic reactions: milk, egg, peanut, tree nut (walnut, cashew, etc.), fish, shellfish, soy, wheat
- B. Allergies that can result in anaphylaxis
 - 1. Nut/nut products
 - 2. Milk
 - 3. Bees
 - 4. Medication
 - 5. Latex
 - 6. Fish- shellfish
 - 7. Soy
 - 8. Wheat
- C. What is anaphylaxis- a sudden, severe, potentially fatal, systemic allergic action that can involve various areas of the body (such as skin, respiratory tract, gastrointestinal tract, and cardiovascular system)
- D. Cross Contamination
- E. Symptoms of anaphylaxis
 - 1. Mouth- itching, tingling or swelling of lips, tongue, mouth
 - 2. Skin- Hives, itchy rash, swelling of the face or extremities
 - 3. Gut – Nausea, abdominal cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
 - 4. Throat- Tightening of the throat, hoarseness, hacking cough
 - 5. Lung- shortness of breath, repetitive coughing, wheezing
 - 6. Heart- Weak or thready pulse, low blood pressure, fainting, pale, blueness
- F. Review of District Administrative Procedures
- G. Question/answers??

Appendices

- 1) School Guidelines for Managing Students with Food Allergies
- 2) Administration of the EpiPen
- 3) Managing Food Allergies in the Cafeteria
- 4) Field Trip Tips for Parents
- 5) Field Trip Tips for Educators
- 6) Food Allergies and School Buses: Finding a Safe Balance
- 7) Avoiding an Allergic Reaction
- 8) Frequently Asked Questions

Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN)
11781 Lee Jackson Hwy., Suite 160
Fairfax, VA. 22033
1-800-929-4040
Website: www.foodallergy.org