

ANDOVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MANAGEMENT OF LIFE-THREATENING FOOD ALLERGIES
PROTOCOL AND GUIDELINES

Background

Allergic food reactions can span a wide range of severity of symptoms. The most severe and potentially life-threatening reaction is anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is the potentially life-threatening medical condition occurring in food allergic individuals after exposure to their specific food allergens. Anaphylaxis refers to a collection of symptoms affecting multiple systems in the body, the most dangerous of which are breathing difficulties and a drop in blood pressure or shock, which are potentially fatal.

This protocol is used for students who are at risk for anaphylaxis and in circumstances where a previously undiagnosed life-threatening allergic response occurs.

The most common causes of anaphylaxis in children include allergies to:

- Foods (most commonly; dairy products, eggs, fish, shellfish, milk, peanuts/tree nuts, soy, wheat).
- Medications
- Bee stings
- Latex

Anaphylaxis can occur immediately or up to two hours following allergen exposure, so it is important to:

- Identify students at risk
- Have appropriate preventative *protocols*
- Be prepared to handle an emergency

Purpose and Goal

The Andover Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide a food allergen-free environment for all students with life-threatening allergies, or prevent any harm to students in emergencies. The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and maintain and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all groups of people within the system.

The goal of the Andover Public Schools regarding life-threatening Food Allergies is to engage in a system-wide effort to:

- Prevent any occurrence of life-threatening food based allergic reactions
- Prepare for any allergic reactions to food
- Respond appropriately to any food allergy emergencies that arise

Responsibilities of the Andover Public School department

The Superintendent and his/her staff will be responsible for the following:

1. Create a system-wide emergency plan for addressing life-threatening food based allergic reactions
2. To the best of our ability, the school will provide annual training for Andover Public School employees regarding:
 - The most common allergens that cause life threatening allergies; such as foods, medications, latex and stinging insects.
 - Ways to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction
 - Steps to take in the event of an allergic reaction.
 - The correct use of *epinephrine auto-injectors*
3. Adopt a “no food trading/sharing” and “no utensil sharing” procedure in all schools with a particular focus at the elementary school level.
4. In the interest of promoting health and wellness, non-food celebrations will be encouraged.
5. Provide and maintain life-threatening food allergy sensitive tables in each school cafeteria as needed by the Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP). These tables will be designated by a universal symbol. These tables will be cleaned and sanitized as per district protocol.
6. Lunch Room assistants/cafeteria personnel, who report to the Principal, will be assigned to clean life-threatening food allergy tables.
7. Make the IHCP available in the nurse’s office and a student’s homeroom at the elementary level and in the nurse’s office at Middle and High school.
8. Make *epinephrine auto-injectors* available in the nurse’s office and in other clearly designated locations as indicated in the IHCP. At the secondary level students are allowed and encouraged to carry their *epinephrine auto-injector* on their person as per physician orders.
9. Familiarize teachers with the IHCP of their students and any other staff member who has contact with the student on a need to know basis.
10. Consult with facilities personnel to develop protocol for cleaning classrooms, cafeteria, and other areas of the building to insure that the threat of allergens is minimized.

Nurse Responsibilities include

1. Meet with the parent/guardian *as necessary for* a student with LTA and develop an allergy action plan or IHCP for the student. During meetings with parents/guardians, nurses shall discuss the use of a MEDIC-ALERT bracelet and other methods of identification for students with LTA’s.
2. In conjunction with the Principal, provide in-service training and education for staff regarding LTA, symptoms, risk reduction procedures and emergency procedures including demonstration on how to use the *epinephrine auto-injector*.
3. Familiarize teachers with the Allergy Action Plan/IHCP of their students and any other staff member who has contact on a need to know basis.
4. Notify Food Services personnel of known allergens in each building.
5. The *School Nurse* will be responsible for following Department of Public Health regulations governing the administration of prescription medications. Nurses are also responsible for following the regulations that permit registration of non-licensed personnel to be trained and administer *epinephrine auto-injectors*.

6. Discuss with parents the appropriate locations for storing *epinephrine auto-injectors* and the possibility of receiving more than one *epinephrine auto-injector* as necessary.
7. Emergency protocol will be in place in the event the nurse is not in the building.

Responsibilities of teachers:

1. Review the Allergy Action Plan/IHCP with the nurse and parents/students as deemed appropriate.
2. Leave information prominent and accessible for the substitute teacher.
3. In collaboration with the nurse and parent, set a classroom protocol regarding the management of food in the classroom.

Responsibilities of Food services personnel

1. The food services department will be sensitive to potential food allergens.
2. Menus will indicate a presence of the major allergen food groups, i.e. nuts, soy, dairy.
3. Supply cleaning materials for washing and sanitizing tables.
4. Provide in-service to food service employees regarding safe food handling practices to avoid cross-contamination with potential allergens.
5. Provide in-service to staff regarding life-threatening allergies, symptoms and emergency procedures and demonstration of use of *epinephrine auto-injectors*.
6. Food services employees will wear non-latex gloves.

Responsibilities of Andover Public Schools transportation

1. The bus company will review the procedure that must be taken in the event of a medical emergency with transportation employees.
2. Provide and maintain functioning emergency communication devices (e.g. cell phones, two-way radios, etc.) on each bus. Transportation employees should ensure proper functioning of communication devices at the start of each shift.
3. Maintain a protocol of “no food eating on the bus”- except for medical emergencies.

Responsibilities of persons in charge of conducting after-school activities

The parent and such individuals have joint responsibility to communicate the student's needs and discuss appropriate actions to be taken during emergencies beyond the school day.

Examples of this may include:

- Before and after school activity instructors
- Coaches
- Babysitters
- Camp Counselors
- Department of Community Services
- Andover Youth Services
- *Nurses will communicate appropriate action plans with school funded programs*

Responsibilities for Fields trips

1. The driver will be alerted on the day of the field trip by the teacher or parent if there is a student with LTA's.
2. The teachers will review emergency procedures to be followed when out of the building for students who may have a medical emergency.
3. Teachers must take into consideration the risk for allergen exposure when planning a trip, however, parents must evaluate potential risks when determining whether their child should attend a field trip.
4. Parents will be given an opportunity to go on the field trip when possible, but are not required to do so.
5. Lunches of children with food allergies should be stored separately to minimize cross contamination.

Responsibilities of parents

1. Inform the school nurse of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after a diagnosis).
2. Parents must arrange to meet with the school nurse to develop an Allergy Action Plan/IHCP for the student and provide medical information from their child's treating physician as needed to write the plans.
3. Provide the school a list of foods and ingredients to be avoided.
4. Provide the school nurse with enough up-to-date emergency medications (including epinephrine auto-injectors) so they can be placed in all required locations for the school year.
5. Complete and submit all required medication forms.
6. Provide a medic alert ID for your child, if possible.
7. Encourage students to:
 - Wash hands before and after handling food.
 - Communicate clearly as soon as s/he feels a reaction is starting.
 - Understand their allergies and how to prevent, recognize potentially unsafe situations and treat when possible.
 - Take as much responsibility for his/her own safety as is feasible.
 - Carry his/her own *epinephrine auto-injector* when appropriate.
 - Read labels.
8. Inform the school of any changes in the child's LTA status.
9. Provide the school with a physician's letter if the student no-longer has allergies.
10. Go on field trips and out of school activities with your child whenever possible.
11. If accommodations cannot be made in the school for the child's allergy, parents will provide appropriate lunches and snacks.
12. Notify the Transportation Coordinator if necessary, of your child's LTA's.

Responsibilities of the student

1. Take responsibility for avoiding allergens.
2. Do not trade or share foods.
3. Wash hands before and after eating.
4. Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction.
5. Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear.
6. Take more responsibility for allergies over time.
7. Develop a relationship with the school nurse or other trusted adult in the school to assist in identifying issues related to management of the allergy in the school.