

Anaphylaxis

1. Avoidance of Allergens

The greatest risk of exposure to allergens is in new situations, or when normal daily routines are interrupted, such as birthday parties or school trips. Young children are at greatest risk of accidental exposure, but many allergists believe that more deaths occur among teenagers due to increased independence, peer pressure and reluctance to carry medication.

Avoidance of allergens is the only way to prevent an anaphylactic reaction. Although it can be difficult to achieve complete avoidance of an allergen, reducing the child's exposure to the allergen is possible. Risk reduction strategies should be flexible enough to address the safety of children with anaphylaxis as well as the organizational and physical environment of the school. Many factors need to be considered when implementing risk reduction strategies such as the age of children, location of eating areas, level of supervision and size of the facility. The most successful strategies enlist the support of the entire community including parents, students and school personnel.

i. Establishing an Allergen Aware Environment

When the school requests that products containing an allergen not be brought into the school building or grounds, it is recommended to use terminology such as “allergen-aware” as opposed to “allergen-free” or “allergen-safe” as it is not possible to guarantee that the allergen will not be present in the facility. Exhibit JLCG-E-2 Allergen Aware/School Newsletter Sample may be used when requesting parents not to send products containing allergens to the school.

ii. Establishing Safe Lunchroom and Eating Area Procedures

Students with life threatening allergies are dependent upon the school to minimize the presence of allergens. Therefore it is recommended that the school:

- a. Require students with life threatening allergies to eat only food prepared from home.
- b. Discourage the sharing of food, utensils and containers.
- c. Encourage the child with life threatening allergies to take precautions such as:
 - i) placing food on wax paper or a paper napkin rather than directly on the desk or table
 - ii) taking only one item at a time from the lunch bag to prevent cross contamination.

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- iii) Establish a hand-washing routine before and after eating.
- d. Wash tables and other eating surfaces after eating, using a cleansing agent approved for school use. This is particularly important for students with peanut allergies because of the adhesive nature of peanut butter.

iii. Allergens Hidden in School Activities

Not all allergic reactions are a result of exposure at meal times.

- a. Teachers will attempt to choose products which are safe for all children in the classroom.
- b. Teachers, particularly in the primary grades, will attempt to be aware of the possible allergens present in curricular materials such as:
 - i) craft materials (e.g. play dough, egg cartons)
 - ii) pets and pet food
 - iii) bean-bags, stuffed toys (peanut shells are sometimes used)
 - iv) counting aids (e.g. beans, peas)
 - v) toys, books and other items which may have become contaminated in the course of normal use
 - vi) science projects, Human Ecology classes
 - vii) special seasonal activities (e.g. Easter eggs, garden projects)
- c. Allow the child with life threatening allergies to keep the same locker and desk all year in order to prevent accidental contamination, as foods are often stored in lockers and desks.

iv. Holidays and Special Celebrations

Food is often associated with special occasions and events. The following procedures will help to protect the child with life threatening allergies.

- a. Require the child with life threatening allergies to eat food brought from his or her own home.
- b. Focus on activities rather than food to celebrate special occasions.

v. Anaphylaxis to Insect Venom

Avoidance is more difficult to achieve for this type of allergy but certain precautions by the schools may be helpful.

- a. Request removal of insect nests from school property by calling the Pembina Trails Facilities & Operations Department.
- b. Allow students with life threatening allergies to insect stings to remain indoors for recess during bee/wasp season.
- c. Immediately remove a student with an allergy to insect venom from the room if a bee or wasp enters.

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- d. Ensure proper storage and prompt disposal of garbage.

2. Emergency Response Protocol

Even when precautions are taken, a student with life threatening allergies may come into contact with an allergen while at school. The emergency response plan included in Exhibit JLCG-E-1 Anaphylaxis Standard Health Care Plan will be implemented for all students with anaphylaxis. The Anaphylaxis Standard Health Care Plan also contains student specific information including allergens and the type, dosage and location of adrenaline auto-injector.

i. Emergency Response Plan

The emergency response plan includes the following:

- a. Administration of the adrenaline auto-injector (NOTE: Although children with life threatening allergies may be taught to administer their own medication, individuals of any age may be unable to complete this task because of the rapid progression of symptoms, or because of the stress of the situation.)
- b. Calling 911/EMS and transport of the student to hospital by ambulance
- c. Contacting the parent/guardian of the student

ii. Location of Adrenaline Auto-injectors

- a. Students shall carry their own adrenaline auto-injector on their person at all times with instructions for use. If the student is not developmentally able to carry the adrenaline auto-injector, it will be kept in an unlocked, safe, easily accessible location, and a staff member will be designated its responsibility.
- b. Parents/guardians have the option of supplying an extra adrenaline auto-injector to be kept in the school office. This extra adrenaline auto-injector shall be kept in a secure location, but unlocked for quick access.

iii. Review Process

The school administrator will review the emergency response plan annually at the beginning of the school year with school staff.

3. Field Trips/Excursions

In addition to the avoidance strategies at the school, the following procedures are recommended specifically for field trips/excursions

- a. Require all staff and volunteers present on the field trip/excursion to be aware of the students with anaphylaxis and his/her allergens.
- b. Assign a specific staff member (or volunteer, at the discretion of the school administrator) that has received URIS training for anaphylaxis to be responsible for the student(s) with anaphylaxis. A copy of the students' Anaphylaxis SHCP shall be carried by the assigned staff member.

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- c. If the risk factors are too great to control, the student with anaphylaxis may be unable to participate in the field trip/excursion. Parents/guardians shall be involved in this decision.
- d. The school administrator shall ensure the student's adrenaline auto-injector is taken on the field trip/excursion.
- e. There shall be reasonable and appropriate access to a telephone, cellular telephone, or radio communication during an excursion.

4. Division of Responsibilities

Ensuring the safety of children with life threatening allergies in a school setting depends upon the understanding and support of the entire school community. To minimize the risk of exposure, and to ensure rapid response to emergency, parents/guardians, students and school staff must all understand and fulfill their responsibilities.

i. Responsibilities of the Parents/Guardians of a Child with Life Threatening Allergies

- a. Inform the school of their child's life-threatening allergies.
- b. Submit all necessary documentation (e.g. JLCD-E-7 URIS Group B Application, JLCG-E-1 Anaphylaxis Standard Health Care Plan, JLCD-E-2 Authorization for the Administration of Medication). If a parent/guardian declines URIS Group B support, after full information has been provided by the school regarding the life threatening risk, the parent/guardian is required to write a letter to the school indicating their decision not to access URIS Group B support and have a health care plan developed for their child. The school should then respond to the parent/guardian in writing and outline how the school will respond in the case of a medical emergency. **It may be warranted for the nurse to meet with the parent and doctor together to reach consensus on the health care plan.**
- c. Ensure their child has and carries an adrenaline auto-injector that is not expired and clearly labelled with the child's name.
- d. Ensure the child takes the adrenaline auto-injector on field trips/excursions.
- e. Be willing to provide safe foods for their child for special occasions.
- f. Teach their child:
 - i) to recognize the first symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction
 - ii) to communicate clearly when he or she feels a reaction starting
 - iii) to carry his/her own adrenaline auto-injector
 - iv) if not carried on the person, to know where medication is kept
 - v) not to share snacks, lunches or drinks
 - vi) to understand the importance of hand-washing
 - vii) to report bullying and threats to an adult in authority.
 - viii) to take as much responsibility as possible for his/her own safety
- i. To consider a medic alert bracelet for their child.

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Responsibilities of the Administrator

- a. Identify a contact person to liaise with the URIS nurse, if other than him/herself.
- b. Ensure all necessary documentation (e.g. JLCD-E-7 URIS Group B Application, JLCG-E-1 Anaphylaxis Standard Health Care Plan, JLCD-E-2 Authorization for the Administration of Medication) has been completed and submitted.
- c. Ensure health information on the school division database is maintained and current.
- d. Notify school staff of the child with life threatening allergies, their allergens and location of their adrenaline auto-injector.
- e. Develop a plan for avoiding allergens within the school.
- f. Provide general awareness regarding life-threatening allergies to the school staff and parents (e.g. letters, notices in school newsletters).
- g. When the parent/guardian indicates their child has an allergy, and it is not known whether the allergy is of a life-threatening nature, send a letter to the parent/guardian, requesting further information, in order that appropriate action can be determined.
- h. If a student does not have an adrenaline auto-injector available at school, inform the parent/guardian that the student does not qualify for URIS Group B support and in the event of an emergency, an ambulance will be called to transport the student to the hospital.
- i. Ensure all school staff are aware of avoidance strategies established by the school including allergens that are not to be used for teaching purposes, art projects, special events or personal consumption in the school.
- j. Ensure agencies responsible for the sale or provision of food in the school (e.g. daily lunch programs, cafeteria) are compliant with the avoidance strategies established by the school.
- k. Ensure school fundraising groups are aware of allergens that are prohibited in the school and do not sell products that contain these allergens.
- l. Maintain up-to-date emergency contacts and telephone numbers.
- m. Ensure that the "allergy alert" for students with anaphylaxis is attached to the cumulative file.
- n. Ensure that all staff and, where appropriate, lunch hour supervisors and bus drivers have received training related to anaphylaxis.
- o. Ensure that all substitute teachers are informed of the presence of students with life threatening allergies in the classroom and that appropriate support/response is available should an emergency occur.
- p. If not deemed appropriate for the student to carry an adrenaline auto-injector, ensure that it is kept in an unlocked, safe, easily accessible location.
- q. Ensure that safe procedures are developed for field trips and extra-curricular activities.
- r. Establish a disciplinary procedure for dealing with bullying and threats.

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- s. Administrators are responsible for seeing that substitute teacher files contain a copy of this emergency plan.

ii. Responsibilities of the Classroom Teacher

- a. Implement the strategies included in the school’s plan for avoiding allergens.
- b. Ensure substitute teachers are aware of the students with life-threatening allergies in the classroom.
- c. Discuss anaphylaxis, in age-appropriate terms, with the class.
- d. Encourage students not to share lunches or trade snacks.
- e. Choose products used in the classroom that are safe for all students in the class.
- f. Reinforce hand washing before and after eating.
- g. Plan appropriately for field trips. Ensure that adrenaline auto-injectors are taken on field trips. Ensure appropriate avoidance strategies are in place when planning overnight excursions (e.g. camp) and/or food is provided by an external agency,
- h. Consult with parents/guardians when planning activities such as field trips, art, science and human ecology projects in order that alternate plans can be developed if necessary.

iii. Responsibilities of the URIS Nurse

- a. Review and sign Exhibit JLCG-E-1 The Anaphylaxis Standard Health Care Plan completed by the student’s parent/guardian.
- b. Consult with and provide information to parents/guardians, students and school personnel as needed.
- c. Provide training and monitoring to school staff that are responsible for students with anaphylaxis.

iv. Responsibilities of the Child with Life Threatening Allergy (as developmentally appropriate)

- a. Take as much responsibility as possible for avoiding allergens, including checking food labels.
- b. Eat only foods brought from home.
- c. Wash hands before and after eating.
- d. Learn to recognize symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction.
- e. Promptly inform an adult, as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear.
- f. Carry their adrenaline auto-injector on his/her person at all times
- g. Know how to use the adrenaline auto-injector.

v. Responsibilities of all Parents/Guardians

- a. Follow the school division Anaphylaxis Policy JLCG.

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- b. Support requests from school to eliminate allergens from packed lunches and snacks.
- c. Encourage their children to respect the needs of their peers with life threatening allergies.
- d. Inform the teacher prior to distribution of food products to any children in the school.

vi. Responsibilities of all Children in the Class

- a. Avoid sharing food, especially with children with known risk of anaphylaxis.
- b. Follow school rules established related to anaphylaxis and avoidance of allergens.
- c. Refrain from bullying or teasing a child with a known risk of anaphylaxis.

vii. Responsibilities of bus drivers

- a. Be aware of students on their assigned bus that have anaphylaxis including their allergen and location of adrenaline auto-injector.
- b. Attend annual training for anaphylaxis provided by the URIS nurses
- c. Carry a copy of the anaphylaxis Emergency Response Plan in an accessible location.

viii. Responsibilities of all divisional employees

- a. All employees of the schools division will refrain from bringing products that contain allergens included in the allergen aware into the school building or grounds.

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