

# **Protocol for students with Life-threatening allergies**



**in the Chelmsford Public Schools**

## **Purpose and Goal**

The Chelmsford Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an 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 to 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.

## **Background**

Allergic reactions can span a wide range of severity of symptoms. The most severe and potentially life threatening reaction is anaphylaxis. This protocol is to be used for students who are at risk for anaphylaxis and in circumstances where a previously undiagnosed life-threatening allergic (LTA) response occurs.

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life-threatening medical condition occurring in allergic individuals after exposure to their specific 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. The most common causes of anaphylaxis in children include allergies to:

- Foods (most commonly but not limited to; peanuts, tree nuts, milk, dairy products, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish)
- Insect stings (yellow jackets, bees, wasps, hornets)
- Medications
- Latex

Anaphylaxis can occur immediately or up to 24 hours following allergen exposure, so it is important to:

- Identify student at risk
- Take measure to prevent life-threatening allergic reactions from occurring
- Be educated and prepared to handle an emergency

**The sections below highlight the major responsibilities of the various groups in schools, but each child's plan will be individualized and therefore not all responsibilities can be spelled out in this protocol.**

## **Responsibilities of Students with Allergies**

1. Take responsibility for avoiding allergens, eating at “allergy sensitive” tables
2. Do not consume foods not approved by parents or nurse
3. Wash hands before and after eating
4. Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction and inform adult immediately
5. Promptly inform an adult of accidental exposure occurs
6. Be receptive to instruction in self-administration of the epipen as one matures.
7. Develop a relationship with the school nurse to assist in identifying issues related to the management of the allergy in the school

## **Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians of Students with Allergies**

- 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 Have your child’s treating physician complete the CPS Allergy Action Plan/Individualized Health Care Plan with medication orders and direction.
- 3 Provide the school list of foods and ingredients to be avoided
- 4 Provide the school nurse with enough up to date emergency medications (epipens) for the current school year
- 5 Provide a **Medic Alert Bracelet** for your child
- 6 Teach your child to:
  - a. Recognize the first symptoms of an allergic reaction
  - b. Know where the epipen is kept and who has access to it
  - c. Communicate clearly as soon as s/he feels a reaction is starting
  - d. Carry own epipen when appropriate
  - e. Not share snacks, lunches or drinks
  - f. Understand the importance of hand washing before and after eating
  - g. Report teasing, bullying and threats to adult authority
  - h. Take as much responsibility as possible for their own safety
- 7 As children get older, teach them to:
  - i. Communicate the seriousness of the allergy
  - j. Communicate symptoms as they appear
  - k. Read labels
  - l. Administer own epipen and be able to train others in its use
- 8 Inform the nurse of any changes in students allergy status
- 9 Inform persons caring for your child about your child’s allergies before and after the academic school day ( Extended day, after school clubs, sports)
- 10 Provide the school with the licensed provider’s statement if the student no longer has allergies
- 11 On field trips and other out of school activities accompany your child, whenever possible
- 12 Provide appropriate safe snacks for your child and consult with the school regarding safe foods for special occasions

### **Responsibilities of the Chelmsford Public School:**

**The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall be responsible for the following:**

1. Ensure a system wide emergency plan for addressing LTA reactions is in place
2. Education should include, but not be limited to:
  - a. A description/definition of severe allergies and a discussion of the most common food, medication, latex and stinging insects
  - b. The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis
  - c. The correct use of an epipen
  - d. Specific steps to follow in the event of an emergency
3. Encourage a “No food trading” and “No utensil sharing” policy in all schools with particular focus at the elementary school level
4. Emergency communication devices (two way radio, intercom, walkie-talkie, cell phone) for all school related activities, including transportation.
5. Require all food service employees to receive allergy education
6. Ensure staff has appropriate cleaning supplies and use only latex free gloves.
7. Ensure allergy sensitive tables in school cafeterias are provided.. These tables will be designated by a universal symbol. These tables will be cleaned between student meal seating’s.
8. A full time nurse should be available in every school with students who have LTA . In conjunction with nurses and the food services director, provide in-service training and education Professional Support Personnel (PSP) and custodians regarding LTA, symptoms, risk reduction procedures (including proper cleaning techniques for the tables) and emergency procedures including demonstration on how to use the epipen.
9. Ensure a plan is in place when there is no school nurse available
10. Encourage curriculum development about food allergies for all grade levels.

### **Responsibilities of the School Principal**

1. Ensure that the wellness policy (6507.06) is followed for non-food service supplied food during the academic hours.
2. Instruct staff to refrain from food treats as rewards and avoid use of foods for classroom activities.
3. Ensure main office staff has the current list of epipen/CPR trained staff members who can respond to LTA emergencies when the nurse is not available in event that the nurse is not in the office.
4. Ensure that functioning communication (cell phone) is taken on field trips.
5. Instruct students not to share or trading snacks
6. On field trips, ensure one person is epipen trained when students with LTA are in attendance ( Checklist)
7. Ensure PSPs are trained in cleaning café tables between meal sessions with approved DPH cleaning products and monitor that this regularly takes place
8. The protocol that explains LTA and the application of the protocol at the school, concerning LTA will be discussed at kindergarten orientation.

## **Responsibilities of the School Nurse**

1. Review the allergy care plan in collaboration parent/guardian. Ensure the parents know the expiration date of emergency medication given to the school and the location where the medication is stored.
2. Notify teachers/PSP's of students with allergies and the specific plan of care.
3. Assess the safety of food used in curriculum programs and make recommendations to principal or program director
4. Never question or hesitate to act if a student reports signs of an allergic reaction
5. Provide in-service training and education for all staff regarding LTA, symptoms, risk reduction procedures and emergency procedures including storage location and demonstration on how to use the epipen
6. Review Field Trip Applications and allergy safety needs, make recommendation to Principals or Program Directors.
7. Reinforce hand-washing before and after eating with students of LTA
8. Keep provided epipens clearly labeled and freely available during the school academic day as required by law.
9. Ensure epipens are taken on the field trip; request a nurse to attend the trip if deemed necessary
10. Collaborate with PSP's in ways students with life threatening allergies can wash hands before eating and share rationale.
11. Keep electronic records up-to-date with LTA information
12. When student deemed appropriate to self-carry epipen, at all times, directly notify student's bus driver if using CPS transportation.
13. Notify your school's main office with a list of building staff members trained in epipen administration and CPR/AED that is current and up to date.

## **Responsibilities of All Staff Supervising Students Eating (after school, field trip)**

1. Participate in Life Threatening Allergy (LTA) education annually
2. Consider being trained in epipen administration
3. Monitor for bullying behavior directed at students with LTA
4. Check X2 health alerts of students in your care
5. Complete food protocol checklist when offering food
6. Plan for cleaning eating surfaces after food consumed ( cross- contamination)
7. Consider eating "sensitive area" for Students with LTA ( consult with nurse)
8. Remind hand washing ( not hand sanitizer) to students with LTA prior food consumption

## **Responsibilities of Professional Support Personnel**

1. Remind students with LTA to wash hands prior eating. (Hand sanitizer is not sufficient, rather soap and water, baby wipes, etc...)
2. Help students with LTA locate someone to sit with at "Nut sensitive" café table. Students who eat a school café supplied lunch are safe to sit at these designated sites.

3. At onset of school year, students with LTA will sit at the nut sensitive table until parents have communicated to the school nurse otherwise.
4. Clean tables with supplied approved cleaning material between meal sessions.
5. Clean tables at the end of lunch period with supplied and approved sanitizing material from custodial staff.
6. Use supplied latex free gloves
7. At elementary level, encourage students with nut products in lunch to sit at one designated end of a café table

### **Responsibilities of food service personnel**

1. To the best of our ability eliminate all peanut/tree nut products in the cafeteria the elementary and secondary school setting and to reduce the area of peanut/tree nut products.
2. Read all food labels and recheck routinely for potential food allergens
3. Train all food service staff and their substitutes to read product food labels and recognize food allergens
4. Assist in the creation of specific areas that will be allergen safe in the kitchen
5. Provide in-service to food service employees regarding safe food handling practices to avoid cross-contamination with potential food allergens
6. Non latex gloves will be used by food service personnel
7. Encourage food service staff to be educated in LTA
8. Know location of a functioning communication device for emergencies (phone, intercom, etc....)
9. Notify School Nurses of changes in student food offerings
10. Will publicly post menu and that it is subject to change.

### **Responsibilities of custodial staff**

1. Participate in in-service training for students with LTA
2. Participate in in-service training for cleaning methods in relation to cafeteria clean up

### **Responsibilities of School Bus Transportation:**

1. Provide emergency communication devices (e.g., cell phones, two-way radios, etc.) on each bus
2. Provide training for all school bus drivers on managing LTA (provide own training or contract with the school) Know local Emergency Medical Service procedures
3. Maintain policy of no food eating on the bus
4. Share provided LTA information from school nurse with sub drivers only as this is confidential information.

### **Responsibilities of persons in charge of conducting after school CPS activities**

1. Share the After School Health Plan Directive with parents to facilitate communication of student care when a nurse is not on duty and medical treatment is needed.

Examples of this may include: before and after school programs, tutors, coaches, baby sitters, Community Education camp counselors etc.

### **Responsibilities of all students and parents in the school community**

1. Respect and follow the district and school protocols regarding food safety; remembering school staff shall not use candy, soft drinks, or snacks of nutritional value not meeting nutrition standards set for public schools, in non-curriculum related classroom based celebrations nor as rewards for students during the academic school day.
2. Seek clarity of protocols from the school nurse or principal.
3. CPS will not tolerate bullying by any staff, community member or student especially as it pertains to life threatening allergies.