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Alexandria City Public Schools



# Food Allergy Guidelines

September 4, 2014

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School Health Guidelines  
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## **I. Introduction**

This document will provide guidelines for parents and schools' staff regarding food allergies. It will assist the building administrators in developing appropriate procedures to reduce the risk of accidental exposure. Some foods can cause life-threatening anaphylactic reactions to occur. The most common foods causing allergic reactions are eggs, peanuts, milk, tree nuts, wheat, fish, soybean, and shellfish.

The Alexandria City Public Schools School Health Program seeks to set age-appropriate guidelines for students and schools that minimize the risk for children with life-threatening food allergies. These guidelines include building-based general medical emergency plans, sample individual healthcare plans for students diagnosed with a life threatening food allergy, training of staff, availability of on site medical equipment for quick response to life-threatening allergic reactions, and such other guidelines to allow students with life- threatening allergies to participate fully in school activities.

It is the expectation that specific building-based guidelines/actions will take into account the health needs and well-being of all children without discrimination or isolation of any child. Open and informative communication is vital for the creating and maintaining an environment with reduced risks for all students and their families. Recognizing that it is not possible to eliminate all possible exposures, these guidelines also encourage age appropriate student education and self-advocacy. In order to assist children with life-threatening allergies to assume more individual responsibility for maintaining their safety, these guidelines will shift as children advance through the primary grades and through secondary school.

## **II. Purpose**

The purpose of these guidelines is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) students and to educate both the school staff and the school community about life-threatening food allergies. In furtherance of this goal, these guidelines are provided to assist building administrators to better understand food allergies and related concerns. Each ACPS school will:

1. Establish a building-based general Medical Emergency Plan that includes a Life-Threatening Allergy Medical Emergency Plan based on a sample ideas included in Appendix A (page 8).
2. Develop and implement an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) for students with diagnosed life-threatening allergies, based on medical documentation as appropriate for individual student needs and circumstances (Appendix B, page 9).
3. Implement annual life-threatening allergy and epinephrine auto-injector training for appropriate staff.
4. Restrict and/or control the use of food during the school day, based on student needs.

### III. Parent/Guardian Responsibility

1. Notify the school nurse and principal of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school each year (or immediately after enrollment or a diagnosis).
2. Provide the school nurse with medical documentation from your licensed health care provider with medication orders before your child enters school.
3. Deliver/provide approved medications in proper containers to the school nurse on the first day your child enters school and maintain a non-expired supply in the Health Room for the duration of the school year.
4. No later than the first day your child enters school, provide the school nurse with a list of foods and/or ingredients that could cause a life-threatening or other allergic reaction.
5. Meet with the school nurse and other school staff to complete the **“AUTHORIZATION TO ADMINISTER EPINEPHRINE AUTOINJECTOR FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE EMERGENCY ALLERGIC REACTIONS”** (now referred to as the **“Individualized Health Care Plan” [IHCP]**). Provide annual updates on your student's health status. This plan can include a mechanism for ongoing communication with school staff.
6. Schedule a meeting with the classroom teacher (grades K-5) to review the IHCP, and Participate in training and education in the classroom, as needed.
7. Educate your child in the self-management of his/her allergy as age appropriate, including: safe and unsafe foods, strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods, symptoms of an allergic reaction, how and when to tell an adult they are having an allergy-related problem, and how to read food labels.
8. Consider purchasing a medical alert bracelet/necklace and encourage your child to wear it at all times.
9. Provide the school with safe snacks for your child and have this noted in the IHCP. Provide a nonperishable lunch to keep in school in case your child forgets lunch one day.
10. Investigate field trip destinations for potential issues (exhibits, activities) that may pose a risk, and inform your child's teacher if you have any concerns.
11. Provide the school administration and nurse with updated emergency contact information including when any mobile/cell phone numbers are changed.

#### **IV. School Administrator/Designee Responsibility**

1. Establish a basic Life-Threatening Allergy Medical Emergency Plan for the building for use in any medical emergency (see Appendix A, page 8).
2. Communicate the name of a student with life-threatening allergies to the nurse to assure that an IHCP has been completed.
3. Monitor satisfaction of cleaning protocol for classrooms, cafeteria, and other areas in the building.
4. Establish a procedure for how and when school staff should communicate with the main office and school nurse in the event of an emergency. This procedure should include guidelines for all school staff, coverage plans for the teacher and the nurse, and specific equipment to facilitate communication.
5. Adopt and maintain a no sharing/no trading food rule in all school buildings.
6. Teach students and staff proper hand washing techniques and encourage students to wash hands before and after eating.
7. Minimize the use of food in classroom with the exception of healthy snacks brought from home for personal consumption by the student. Principals should require ways that do not involve food to celebrate and honor student achievements and milestones. ACPS policy forbids the use of food as a reward/incentive.
8. Designate to the teacher or activity sponsor the responsibility for giving advance notice to a parent and school nurse, as stipulated in the IHCP, of any school activity or project that requires the use of food.
9. Limit/discourage the use of food in curriculum instruction if at all possible. If food is used, notify parents and school nurse in advance as stipulated in the IHCP (Grades K-5).
10. Prohibit consuming food on routine school bus routes. Food may be allowed on longer trips with appropriate supervision by school personnel and for students with special health needs requiring the consumption of food at non-meal times.
11. Food is not to be in hallways or on the playgrounds.
12. Eliminate food sales in elementary school stores.

13. At the elementary level, provide guidelines for monitoring snacks and lunch:
  - a. Send a letter to parents stating that food other than lunches and healthy snacks intended for student's own consumption are not be brought into schools (except for special circumstances, such as the student who requires snacks at regular intervals due to a health condition).
  - b. Establish within cafeterias eating areas/designated tables for the consumption of specific foods, as needed.
  - c. Create flexibility in grouping students during the lunch period to limit exposure to potential allergens.
  - d. Eliminate specific potential allergens, if necessary, to protect food allergic students.
14. Request that the school nurse provide an annual educational program for building staff on life-threatening allergies in the classroom if there are students with life-threatening allergies in the building that school year. These training sessions for all school staff should be conducted as soon as practical each school year. Training will include a review of the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and the proper use of the epinephrine auto injectors. It will also emphasize the importance of prevention, risk reduction, and early recognition of an allergic reaction and timely use of epinephrine.
15. As appropriate, establish an emergency plan for field trips that includes how to activate EMS and who carries and administers epinephrine auto injectors. Classroom teachers will ensure that staff trained in the administration of an epinephrine autoinjector attends field trips when they include students with food allergic students.
16. Communicate to all school staff in September and January about the potential for life threatening food allergies for students and remind them about the policies in place. Ensure that at least three people in the building are trained in epinephrine autoinjector administration, including the student's teachers, if appropriate. Ensure contingency plans are in place in the event of teacher or school nurse absence.

## **V. School Nurse Responsibility**

1. Develop an IHCP and assure there is a Medication Administration Plan completed by parents/guardians and a multidisciplinary school team (when appropriate) prior to school entry or at the first opportunity following a new diagnosis of a life-threatening food allergy. Arrange for periodic review of IHCP, at least annually.
2. Maintain open and frequent communication between home and school.
3. Remind parents to review IHCP with their child. Meet with the student individually to review IHCP.

4. Communicate these plans to school staff that have a “need to know”.
5. At the beginning of each school year, provide education and training of all school staff to review the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and epinephrine autoinjector administration. This may be done via email and also posted on Blackboard.
6. Conduct in-service training and education for appropriate staff, including field trip designees, regarding an individual student’s life-threatening allergies, symptoms, risk reduction procedures and emergency procedures, as described in their IHCP and AAP.
7. Maintain a list of students who require epinephrine auto injectors for allergic reactions in the Health Office. IHCPs for those students will be available in their health records and in Substitute Nurse Manuals.
8. Provide parents/students with information on the availability of medical alert identification.

#### **V. Food Services Manager Responsibilities**

1. Attend annual training on food allergies.
2. Follow safe food handling practices to avoid cross contamination with potential food allergens.
3. Follow cleaning and sanitation protocol and safe food handling practices to avoid cross-contamination.
4. With parental approval, set up procedures for the cafeteria regarding food allergic students, including entering student’s allergy into database.
5. After receiving the IHCP, and in accordance with guidance from Alexandria Food and Nutrition Services, make reasonable modifications, as feasible, for meals served to students with food allergies.
6. Respond appropriately to all concerns from any student or parent with a life-threatening allergy and allow the student to see the school nurse if having any allergic symptoms.
7. All food served or sold have ingredient labels that are housed in the School Nutrition Services main office at TC Williams High School. Parents may contact a registered dietician to review them.

**VI. Cafeteria Hostess/Custodial Responsibilities**

1. Attend training according to the student's individual health care plan.
2. Follow safe food handling practices to avoid cross contamination with potential food allergens.
3. Follow cleaning and sanitation protocol to avoid cross-contamination and thoroughly clean all tables, chairs and floors after each meal.
4. Provide a clearly labeled allergen free table for students if required by an IHCP.
5. Respond appropriately to all concerns from any student or parent of a student with a life-threatening allergy, and allow the student to see the school nurse if having any allergic symptoms.

**VII. Student's Responsibility**

1. Do not trade food with others.
2. Wash hands before and after eating.
3. Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
4. Be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.
5. Notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic, and/or if they believe they are having any symptoms of an allergic reaction.

**VIII. Transportation Staff Responsibility**

1. Provide a representative for school team meetings to discuss implementation of a student's IHCP, as appropriate.
2. Provide annual training for all school bus drivers on managing life-threatening allergies.
3. Provide functioning emergency communication device (e.g., cell phone, two-way radio, walkie-talkie or similar device).
4. Know how to activate Emergency Medical Services (EMS).
5. Maintain a policy of not permitting food to be eaten on school buses.

## APPENDIX A

### Alexandria City Public Schools Creating a Life Threatening Allergy Medical Emergency Plan

Below are some suggestions for considering a Life Threatening Allergy Medical Emergency Plan. Remember to document all training, including who was trained, materiel covered, and date. Hold review classes on a regular basis.

#### **If an apparent allergic reaction occurs:**

- Where should the student go – to the main office? The Health Center (clinic)?
- Who should accompany the child – another student? The teacher? If so, who will stay with the other students?
- What should be done if the student is in the lunch room, classroom, or gym?
- Whose responsibility is it to call the nurse?
- If the nurse is not present, who is next in line for action?
- Where is each student's Individualized Health Care Plan filed?
- Where are medications kept?
- Who will train substitute teachers or cafeteria aides?

#### **Field trips:**

- How will field trips be handled?
- Who will be responsible for carrying and administering the medication?
- What steps can be taken to minimize risks?

#### **After-School Activities:**

- Who is in charge if a reaction occurs after school?
- Where will medication be kept?
- Who should the after school staff member (e.g., coach) report a reaction to?
- What steps should be taken during a reaction?

#### **If epinephrine is administered:**

- *Any allergic reaction treated with epinephrine requires immediate follow-up in and emergency care facility, even if symptoms appear to have gone away.*
- Who will call an ambulance to transport the student to the hospital?
- Who will call the parents and/or doctor (after calling the ambulance)?
- Who is responsible for calling the emergency medical system?
- Will the person call from the nurse's office, the main office, cafeteria, or elsewhere?
- Where will the student be expected to wait after the call is made?
- What trained staff person is assigned to stay with the student at all time once medication has been administered?

Source: [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)

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**Appendix B  
Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP)**

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**ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
AUTHORIZATION TO ADMINISTER EPINEPHRINE AUTOINJECTOR FOR  
THE MANAGEMENT OF ACUTE EMERGENCY ALLERGIC REACTIONS**

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_  
 School Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART I: TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/GUARDIAN:**

I will supply medication to the school nurse and request that this medication be available in the school as prescribed by my student's physician. I agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless Alexandria City Public Schools, their staff and agents from lawsuit, claim demand or action related to the use of this medication.

My child IS \_\_\_\_\_ IS NOT \_\_\_\_\_ capable of self-administration of the epinephrine autoinjector medication.

I DO \_\_\_\_\_ DO NOT \_\_\_\_\_ want my child to carry the epinephrine autoinjector medication during the school day.

The school nurse will release the epinephrine autoinjector medication to the trained ACPS staff member accompanying my child on every field trip during the current school year unless I request otherwise.

Before allowing the student to carry an epinephrine autoinjector in school, the school nurse will review proper use with the student. The school nurse must sign that the student demonstrates proper knowledge before the student will be allowed to carry the epinephrine autoinjector medication.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Numbers: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

**PART II: TO BE COMPLETED BY PHYSICIAN/LICENSED PRESCRIBER:**

Name of medication  
 : \_\_\_\_\_ (EPINEPHRINE AUTO INJECTOR)

Reason for medication: Management of acute allergic reaction to:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. stinging insects (bees, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets)
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. ingestion of \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. other \_\_\_\_\_

Medication to be given:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. immediately after insect bite
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. immediately after ingestion of \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. other \_\_\_\_\_

Route of administration: Intramuscularly into anterolateral aspect of thigh

Dosage of medication:

\_\_\_\_\_ Epinephrine Autoinjector 0.15mg \_\_\_\_\_ Epinephrine Autoinjector 0.30mg

Possible side effects: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician/Licensed Prescriber's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(Signature)

(Printed/Stamped)

Physician/Licensed Prescriber's contact number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PART III: TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL NURSE:**

Check as appropriate:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Part I and II listed above completed with all information
- \_\_\_\_\_ Medication is properly labeled
- \_\_\_\_\_ Medication label and dosage match physician's order
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have reviewed the proper use of the Epi-Pen with the student and I  
 AGREE \_\_\_\_\_ DISAGREE \_\_\_\_\_ that the student should carry it during school hours.

Medication expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

Nurse: (Signature): \_\_\_\_\_ (Printed/Stamped): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Food Allergy References

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