

Administrative Procedure 319

Students

SEVERE ALLERGIES

BACKGROUND

The primary goal of this administrative procedure is to reduce the risk of exposure of students with severe allergies to potentially life threatening allergens. Recognizing the fact that it is impossible to totally eliminate allergens in the school environment, the superintendent also requires that an appropriate emergency response protocol be developed.

Reducing the risk of exposure and ensuring a rapid response to emergency situations is a shared responsibility of parents, students and school personnel.

The education of all members of the school community by sharing information and promoting awareness is an essential aspect of this policy.

Practices under this procedure must balance the needs and rights of the student with severe allergies with those of the total school population.

DEFINITIONS

1. In this administrative procedure,
 - 1.1 “allergen” means a substance which provokes an allergic response and includes bee or wasp venom, certain foods, e.g., peanuts or tree nuts, latex and other chemicals;
 - 1.2 “injector” means a syringe and needle which contains a pre-measured dose of epinephrine or adrenaline and includes EpiPens® and other pre-loaded auto-injectors;
 - 1.3 “parent” means a parent as defined in the *Education Act*;
 - 1.4 “severe allergy” means a severe allergic reaction or anaphylactic response to an allergen which, if left untreated, can lead to sudden death.

PROCEDURES

1. Responsibilities of Parents
 - 1.1 Parents of a student with severe allergies must:
 - 1.1.1 complete and keep current the Administration of Prescription Medication and/or Medical Treatment Form provided for under AP-316. Requested information includes:
 - allergen(s);
 - symptom(s) of a reaction;
 - emergency action plan;
 - 1.1.2 provide the student with a Medic Alert bracelet or other suitable identification;
 - 1.1.3 provide one unexpired injector in a fanny pack and, where possible, an additional injector and other medication as prescribed by a physician;
 - 1.1.4 check expiry dates of injectors or other medications and replace them as necessary;
 - 1.1.5 provide snacks and lunches for the student;
 - 1.1.6 assist the principal in providing educational information about severe allergies to other parents and the school community;

- 1.1.7 advise the bus driver of the student's severe allergies; and
- 1.1.8 teach their child to assume as much responsibility as possible for their own safety including the:
 - recognition of the symptoms of a severe allergic reaction; and
 - need to have the medication readily available while at school, on field trips or at other school sponsored activities including transportation to and from school.
- 1.2 All parents are asked to:
 - 1.2.1 respond cooperatively to requests from school administration to reduce the risk of exposure to allergens;
 - 1.2.2 develop an awareness of severe allergies including background information on allergies, anaphylaxis, school policy and risk reduction strategies; and
 - 1.2.3 expect their children to respect and be tolerant of students with severe allergies and to adhere to charter board policy, administrative procedures and school policy.

2. Responsibilities of Students

- 2.1 Students with severe allergies must:
 - 2.1.1 take as much responsibility as reasonably possible for avoiding allergens;
 - 2.1.2 eat only foods brought from home unless authorized by the parent, which shall normally be made in writing;
 - 2.1.3 wash their hands before and after eating;
 - 2.1.4 learn to recognize the symptoms of a severe allergic reaction;
 - 2.1.5 promptly inform a teacher or lunchroom supervisor or other adult if they do not feel well, if they have or suspect they may have ingested or have otherwise been exposed to an allergen, or symptoms of a severe allergic reaction appear;
 - 2.1.6 keep an injector and/or other medication handy at all times; and
 - 2.1.7 when age appropriate, know how to use an injector or take medication.
- 2.2 All students are expected to:
 - 2.2.1 avoid sharing food, especially with children with severe allergies;
 - 2.2.2 follow school policy for reducing risk;
 - 2.2.3 wash their hands before and after eating; and
 - 2.2.4 refrain from harassing or threatening a child with a food allergy.

3. Responsibility of the Principal

- 3.1 The principal is responsible for planning the coordination and management of students who have life-threatening allergies.
- 3.2 The principal is encouraged to involve parents in all phases of this process.
- 3.3 The principal shall:
 - 3.3.1 advise all parents of this administrative procedure;
 - 3.3.2 consult with and advise the parents of the student with severe allergies and the broader school community of school policy regarding severe allergies;

- 3.3.3 regularly ask all parents to respond cooperatively to requests designed to reduce the risk of exposure to allergens, i.e. to refrain from sending certain allergenic products to school;
- 3.3.4 request parental consent for the administration of medication or medical treatment;
- 3.3.5 advise all staff members of students who have potentially life threatening allergies as soon as possible;
- 3.3.6 ensure that harassment or threats are promptly dealt with in accordance with policy and procedures.
- 3.4 The principal must ensure that an emergency care plan:
 - 3.4.1 is developed for each student with severe allergies in cooperation with the parents, the student's physician and, where the principal deems it necessary, the public health nurse; and
 - 3.4.2 is kept in a readily accessible location at the school and includes emergency contact information.
- 3.5 The principal shall develop school policy consistent with this administrative procedure to reduce risk for those students with severe allergies in the school, for school sponsored activities and for visiting students:
 - 3.5.1 the principal shall meet with the classroom teacher, parent and student, if appropriate, at the beginning of each school year and as necessary, to determine those risk reduction strategies which should apply to that particular student.
 - 3.5.2 the decision about the risk reduction strategies to be used shall take into consideration such factors as the student's age and maturity, the layout and facilities of the school building, the ability of school staff to ensure compliance and the impact of the strategy on others.
 - 3.5.3 specific school policy shall be developed for field trips. If risk factors are too great to control, the student may be unable to participate in the field trip. The parent should be involved in this decision.

4. Educating the School Community

- 4.1 The principal must ensure that:
 - 4.1.1 all teaching and non-teaching school staff including lunchroom supervisors receive training as needed, in the recognition of a severe allergic reaction and the use of injectors and the emergency plan; and
 - 4.1.2 all members of the school community are provided with appropriate information about severe allergies including background information on allergies, anaphylaxis, school policy and risk reduction strategies.

5. Responsibilities of Teachers and Other School Staff

- 5.1 All classroom teachers are expected to:
 - 5.1.1 discuss anaphylaxis with their class, in age-appropriate terms; and
 - 5.1.2 encourage an empathetic understanding of severe allergies and the seriousness of the consequences.
- 5.2 The teachers of a student with severe allergies are expected to:
 - 5.2.1 avoid allergenic foods and substances for classroom events;
 - 5.2.2 leave information about all students with severe allergies in an organized, prominent and accessible format for substitute teachers;
 - 5.2.3 ensure that appropriate medication is taken on field trips; and

- 5.2.4 ensure that appropriate and knowledgeable adults accompany field trips.
- 5.3 All school staff are expected to:
 - 5.3.1 know the school's emergency response protocol;
 - 5.3.2 encourage students not to share or trade food;
 - 5.3.3 encourage the student with severe allergies to eat only what they bring from home;
 - 5.3.4 reinforce hand-washing before and after eating; and
 - 5.3.5 follow school policy for reducing risk.
- 6. Emergency Response Protocol
 - 6.1 The principal must ensure that:
 - 6.1.1 an emergency response protocol is developed for the school including collection and storage of injectors, education of all parties, procedure to be followed, location of the medication, field trip or extra-curricular procedures;
 - 6.1.2 an emergency response drill is developed and practiced throughout the school year to ensure that all parties know how to quickly implement the plan;
 - 6.1.3 any injectors provided by the parent and which are not in the student's possession are stored in a covered, secure and accessible location at the school; and
 - 6.1.4 all teaching and non-teaching staff including lunchroom supervisors are aware of the location of the injectors.

Legal Reference: *Emergency Medical Aid Act*
Cross Reference: AP-316 Administration of Medication or Medical Treatment
 AP-336 Student Health and Safety
 AP-341 Harassment by Students
 AP-350 Student Discipline
 AP-409 Personal Harassment
 Anaphylaxis: A Handbook for School Boards, Canadian School Boards Association
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