
209 Students AP – Anaphylaxis (Severe Allergies)

Background:

Prairie Rose Public Schools recognizes the dangers faced by students with severe allergic or anaphylactic reactions. While the division cannot guarantee an *allergen free* environment, the division will take reasonable steps to ensure an **allergy aware** environment so that students with life-threatening allergies feel safe and supported at school.

While parents and students (depending on the student's age and maturity) remain responsible for providing schools with information regarding life-threatening allergies and supplying the required medication for use at school (if needed), Prairie Rose Public Schools believes the safety of students with life-threatening allergies is vitally important and supports the following procedures to protect these students.

Definitions:

Allergen: a substance capable of causing an allergic reaction

Allergy: an altered immune response caused by a specific substance

Allergy Aware/ allergy safe environment: school sites that provide comprehensive information about allergens, allergies and anaphylaxis to students, parents and staff members, and that minimize the extent to which individual at the site who have severe allergies are at risk of exposure to potentially life-threatening allergens

Anaphylaxis: a severe allergic reaction which can be fatal

1. Where a student is inordinately vulnerable to severe reaction or injury, the principal shall ensure that appropriate arrangements with parents are made for the welfare of the child.
2. Every effort shall be made to minimize the risk of exposure to potentially life-threatening allergens for students with severe allergies, without depriving them of normal peer interactions or placing unreasonable restrictions on the activities of other students in the school.
3. Anaphylaxis is the medical term for “allergic shock” which can be very rapid and deadly. While peanut is by far the most common allergen causing anaphylaxis in school-aged children, tree nuts, cow’s milk, eggs, fish and shellfish are relatively common lethal allergens as well. Other foods can trigger anaphylactic reactions in some individuals as well as some non-food allergens including insect venom, medications and latex.
4. An anaphylactic reaction can develop within seconds of exposure. It may begin with itching, hives or swelling of the lips or face; within moments, the throat may begin to close, choking off breathing and leading to death. Because there is no way of ensuring that schools can provide a peanut-free or allergen-free environment, this administrative guideline outlines procedures for responding to an anaphylactic emergency, including the training of school personnel in the use of an epinephrine auto-injection device like EpiPen.
5. The three major areas covered in this administrative guideline include the following:
 - a. information and awareness

209 Students AP – Anaphylaxis (Severe Allergies)

- b. responsibilities of parents, students, principal, staff members and supervisors
- c. emergency response procedures in case of accidental exposure.

Educating the School Community

1. As soon as possible at the start of each school year, whether or not there is a known anaphylactic situation, the Principal will ensure in servicing of all members of the school community, including regular and substitute teachers, teacher assistants, all support staff, classroom and out-of-classroom volunteers and bus drivers, regarding background information about allergies and anaphylaxis, recognition of severe allergic reactions, use of injectors and safety procedures. (<https://www.epipen.ca/index.php/epipen-video-gallery>)
2. After being notified by parents of an anaphylactic situation, the Principal must ensure that all concerned members of the school community have appropriate information about each student's condition and appropriate responses. The Principal may enlist local health professionals to help in any situations applicable.
3. With the consent of the parent, the Principal and the classroom teacher must ensure that the student's classmates are provided with information on severe allergies in a manner that is appropriate for age and maturity level of the students. Strategies to reduce teasing/bullying should also be incorporated in this information.
4. The Principal will post a picture of the student with severe allergies, with a description of the allergy and the student's emergency plan in a central, but not public, location at the school.

Responsibilities

1. **Parents** of students with severe allergies must:
 - a. advise the principal, homeroom teacher, bus driver and out-of-classroom volunteers regarding the student's severe allergy,
 - b. provide and keep emergency contact information current,
 - c. provide the principal with Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan, completed and signed by the student's medical doctor,
 - d. provide a copy of current prescriptions,
 - e. provide the principal with a recent photograph of the student,
 - f. educate their child on avoidance strategies,
 - g. provide the student with a Medic Alert bracelet or other suitable identification,
 - h. provide the student with a case containing at least one unexpired injector or other medication as prescribed by a physician and ensure that the student has the case or medication readily available while at school, on field trips or at other school events and activities,
 - i. check expiry dates of medication and injectors and replace them as necessary,
 - j. supply the school with an auto-injector instruction sheet,
 - k. provide snacks and lunches for the student,

209 Students AP – Anaphylaxis (Severe Allergies)

- I. provide, through written consent, permission for staff to administer medication (Authorization to Administer Medication to Students)
2. **Students** with severe allergies must:
 - a. eat only foods brought from home unless authorized by the parents in writing,
 - b. wash their hands before eating,
 - c. learn to recognize symptoms of a severe allergic reaction,
 - d. promptly inform a teacher or an adult as soon as accidental ingestion or exposure to an allergen occurs, or symptoms of a severe allergic reaction appear,
 - e. keep an injector or medication handy at all times,
 - f. when age appropriate, know how to use an injector or take medication,
 - g. wear medical alert identification.
3. The **Principal** is responsible for planning the coordination and management of students who have severe allergies and must:
 - a. advise the parents of the student with severe allergies of this guideline,
 - b. consult with and advise the parents of the student with severe allergies, the school council and the school community of any school specific procedures regarding severe allergies,
 - c. request that parents or guardians sign the Authorization to Administer Medication form,
 - d. advise all staff members, bus drivers and volunteers (classroom and out-of-classroom) regarding students who have severe allergies, as early as possible in the school year.
 - e. ensure that an emergency plan is developed for each student with severe allergies, in cooperation with the parents, and ensure that the emergency plan and contact information are kept in a readily accessible location at the school,
 - f. ensure that the various components identified in Section A: Educating the School Community and Section C: Emergency Response Protocol, are carried out, and
 - g. ensure that the school has one generic unexpired epi-pen that is located in an accessible area for staff.
4. The **classroom teacher** of a student with severe allergies should:
 - a. discuss anaphylaxis with the class, in age-appropriate terms (the school public health nurse will assist or present when requested),
 - b. discourage allergenic foods and substances for classroom events,
 - c. facilitate communication with other parents,
 - d. provide information about students with severe allergies in an organized, prominent and accessible format for substitute teachers,
 - e. ensure that required medication as provided by the parent is securely taken on field trips but also readily accessible when needed,
 - f. ensure that appropriate and knowledgeable adults accompany students on field trips,
 - g. be knowledgeable in the recognition of a severe anaphylactic reaction, the use of injectors and the emergency plan for that student,

209 Students AP – Anaphylaxis (Severe Allergies)

- h. provide a copy of the emergency plan in their day planner and with information for substitute teachers.
5. **Staff and volunteers** (including those involved with serving food to students) who supervise students with severe allergies in a lunchroom or playground setting must:
 - a. know the school's emergency response protocol,
 - b. encourage students not to share or trade food,
 - c. encourage the student with severe allergies to eat only what is brought from home,
 - d. reinforce hand-washing before and after eating,
 - e. follow school policies for reducing risk in classrooms and common areas, and
 - f. encourage an empathetic understanding of severe allergies and the seriousness of the consequences.

Emergency Response Protocol

1. The Principal must ensure that a separate emergency response plan for each student with severe allergies is cooperatively developed by school personnel and the child's parents.
2. The emergency plan shall include a rapid response procedure to:
 - a. administer epinephrine,
 - b. contact 911 to transport the child to hospital if necessary,
 - c. contact the child's parents,
 - d. include a familiar and trusted adult to accompany the child,
 - e. ensure inhalers and EpiPen's, etc. are readily available for classroom and outdoor access.
3. Any injectors provided by parents and which are not in the child's possession are to be stored in a covered, secure and accessible location at the school. All staff should be aware of the location of the injectors.

Resources:

[Bill 201 – Protection of Students with Life-Threatening Allergies Act](#)

[Policy Advisory: Anaphylaxis - Alberta School Boards Association](#)

Alberta Education Resources - <https://www.alberta.ca/students-with-medical-needs.aspx>

Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (2016) Anaphylaxis in Schools and Other Settings, 3rd ed. [Patient and School Resources](#)

Food Allergy Canada - **Think - FAST** poster

EpiPen, Canada - **Blue to the Sky, Orange to the Thigh** poster

Chung, Bonnie (2020) - Anaphylaxis - Symptoms and steps Graphic

Revised:

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