

JLCG

5/10/04

LIFE-THREATENING FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

It is the policy of the Newton School Committee to set age-appropriate guidelines for students and schools within the Newton system that minimize the risk for children with life-threatening food allergies (LTA) to be exposed to offending allergens that may trigger a life-threatening reaction. Such guidelines shall include: building-based general medical emergency plans, life-threatening food allergy emergency plans, individual healthcare plans for all students diagnosed with LTA, appropriate training of staff, availability on site of medical equipment for quick response to life-threatening allergic reactions, and such other guidelines that will ensure that students with LTA can participate fully in school activities without undue fear of harm from exposure to life-threatening food allergens.

It is the School Committee's 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. It is the School Committee's belief that education and open and informative communication are vital for the creation of an environment with reduced risks for all students and their families. In order to assist children with LTA to assume more individual responsibility for maintaining their safety as they grow, it is the policy of the School Committee that the guidelines shift as children advance through the primary grades and through secondary school.

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5/10/04

Newton Public Schools
Life-Threatening Food Allergies Guidelines
5/10/04

PURPOSE

To minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to Newton students and to educate the Newton school community about life-threatening food allergies.

1. Establish a building-based general Medical Emergency Plan and Life-Threatening Allergy Medical Emergency Plan.
2. Develop and implement an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) for all students with diagnosed life-threatening allergies, based on medical documentation.
3. Implement annual life-threatening allergy and epi-pen training for all staff.
4. Minimize the use of food during the school day.

Family Responsibility

1. Notify the school nurse and principal of your child's allergies.
2. Provide medical documentation from your health care provider to the school nurse.
3. Provide a list of foods and/or ingredients that would cause a life-threatening reaction to the school nurse.
4. Complete the medication permission form before your child enters school.
5. Deliver/provide approved medications in proper containers to school on the first day of school.
6. Meet with the school nurse to develop an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) and Allergy Action Plan (AAP). This plan will include a mechanism for ongoing communication with school staff.
7. Schedule a meeting with the classroom teacher to review the IHCP (Individual Health Care Plan). (Grades K – 5)

8. Educate your child in the self-management of their allergy as age appropriate including: safe and unsafe foods, strategies for avoiding the allergen, symptoms of an allergic reaction, how and when to tell an adult a reaction is starting, and how to read food labels.
9. Purchase a medical alert bracelet/necklace and encourage your child to wear it at all times.
10. Provide the school with safe snacks to be used as stipulated in the IHCP.
11. Investigate field trip destinations for potential issues (exhibits, activities) that may pose a risk.
12. Go on field trips with your child, if possible.
13. Participate in training and education in the classroom. (Grades K-5)

School Responsibility

1. Establish a basic Medical Emergency Plan for the building for use in any medical emergency.
2. Ensure that an IHCP for each child with a life-threatening allergy (LTA) is created and implemented.
3. Establish a cleaning protocol for classrooms, cafeteria, and other areas of the building.
4. Emphasize the procedure of how and when to communicate with the main office and school nurse in the event of an emergency. This plan should include 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 policy. (Grades K – 5)
6. Teach students and staff proper hand washing techniques before and after eating.
7. Avoid the use of food for classroom and school-wide functions. (Grades K-5)
8. Advise parents of any school activity that requires the use of food in advance of the project or activity as stipulated in the IHCP. (Grades K – 5)
9. Limit the use of food for curriculum instruction. If food is used, notify parents in advance as stipulated in the IHCP. (Grades K-5)
10. Prohibit food on routine school bus routes. (Food may be allowed on longer trips with appropriate supervision by school personnel.)
11. Eliminate food sales in elementary school stores.
12. At the elementary level, provide guidelines for monitoring snack and lunch. In classes where children have a life-threatening allergy, the principal may:

- i. send a letter strongly requesting that certain foods not be brought into schools;
 - ii. establish within classrooms/cafeterias eating areas designated for the consumption of specific foods;
 - iii. have flexibility in grouping students during the lunch period to limit exposure to potential allergens, and;
 - iv. completely eliminate specific, potential allergens.
13. Provide an educational program for staff on Life-Threatening Allergies (LTA) in the classroom where there are students with LTA.
 14. Conduct training sessions for all school staff as soon as possible each school year. Training will include a review of the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and the proper use of the epi-pen and will emphasize the importance of prevention and risk reduction.
 15. Emphasize the importance of early recognition of an allergic reaction and timely use of Epinephrine.
 16. Establish an emergency plan for field trips that includes how to activate EMS and who carries and administers epi-pens.
 17. Practice emergency LTA Medical Emergency Plan/Medical Emergency Plan twice each school year in September and January.

School Nurse Responsibility

1. Develop an IHCP, corresponding Allergy Action Plan (AAP) and Medication Administration Plan with the parents/guardian and a multidisciplinary school team (when appropriate) prior to school entry or at the first opportunity following a new life-threatening food allergy diagnosis.
2. Maintain open and frequent communication between home and school.
3. Communicate these plans to school staff that have a 'need to know' (e.g., principal, teachers, specialists, food service personnel, bus driver, coaches).
4. At the beginning of each school year, provide education and training of all school staff to review the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and epi-pen administration.
5. Conduct in-service and education for appropriate staff, including before and after school programs and 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.
6. Post a list of students who require epi-pens for allergic reactions in the health office. IHCPs and AAPs for those students will be available in their health records.
7. Provide information on the availability of medical alert identification.