

Walla Walla Public Schools
Summary of Parent Guidelines for Students with
Life Threatening Food Allergies

8/11/04

Awareness, Prevention, and Emergency Preparedness

By working together, parents, students, medical professionals, school district team members, and community partners can create a safe and nurturing environment for all of our students, including those with life threatening allergies. The first two keys to this safe environment are awareness and prevention.

Awareness means that students, staff, and the community become more aware of the impact of life threatening allergies and a better understanding of its impact and implication to students and families who have to live with this condition. It also means that key school team members know who in their school community has a life threatening allergy.

Prevention addresses the need to limit or avoid possible exposure of students with life threatening allergies to their allergen. The school district has reviewed and will continue to update key procedures and forms that help protect these students. **One of the key ways to help prevent allergy problems in school is for the parent to ensure that all the necessary health information and forms are updated each year.** A law is now in place (RCW 28A.210) that requires each family to provide the school a completed Emergency Action Plan along with required medication and a completed medication request form before their child with a life threatening allergy can attend school.

Another key to prevention is for the family to **provide meals and snack items from home** if possible. Local allergists recommend this, and foods provided from home offer the safest option for students with life threatening allergies.

Unfortunately, total avoidance is simply not possible because many of the offending substances are so widespread or hidden in our daily environments. That is why **Emergency Preparedness** is so important. Each child with life threatening allergies will have an Emergency Action Plan in place, and key school team members will be trained.

Care Team Responsibilities

Family's Responsibility

- Notify the school of the child's allergies.
- Work with the school team to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school, including in the classroom, in the cafeteria, in after-care programs, during school-sponsored activities, as well as an Emergency Action Plan.
- Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician, using the Emergency Action Plan as a guide.
- Provide small photo of the child (approx. 1½" x 2") to be used on the Emergency Action Plan.
- Replace medications after use or upon expiration.
- Ensure all necessary enrollment forms are filled out accurately and updated annually to keep parent and emergency contact information accurate.
- Educate the child in the self-management of their food allergy including:
 - Safe and unsafe food
 - Strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods
 - Symptoms of allergic reactions
 - How and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy related problem
 - How to read food labels (age appropriate)
 - How to use Epi Pen, as advised by physician

If epinephrine (Epi-Pen) is used, the student should be taken to the hospital for evaluation even if the allergic reaction symptoms subside.

- Review policies/procedures and Emergency Action Plan with the school staff, the child's physician, and the child (if age appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.
- Ensure student information and necessary forms are provided if the child transfers schools at any time during the school year.
- Notify school staff of any changes in the Emergency Action Plan including emergency contact phone numbers.
- Share food allergy information including a copy of the Emergency Action Plan and medication orders with all after school programs/activities.
- Provide safe snacks for classroom parties and other special events.
- Provide safe meals from home, if possible. This is the safest option for a child with life threatening allergies.
- Work with kitchen staff and district nutrition services to ensure safe school meal options are selected if the child will eat at school.

Student's Responsibility

- Should not share or trade food or eating utensils with others.
- Should not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
- Should be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.
- Should notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic.
- Should notify an adult if they are being picked on or threatened by other students as it relates to their food allergy.

Walla Walla Public Schools' staff responsibilities are detailed in the Walla Walla Public Schools Staff and Parent Guidelines for Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies.

Reference

Walla Walla Public Schools Staff and Parent Guidelines for Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies.

Resources

The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN). FAAN is a great resource for current research, informational newsletter, support groups, and information of food products. Their phone number is 800-929-4040, and the Web address is: www.foodallergy.org

Allergy, Asthma Information Association of Canada. (AAIA) <http://cgi.cadvision.com/~allergy/aaia.html>

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. (AAAAI). <http://www.aaaai.org>

National Association of School Nurses. <http://www.nasn.org>

Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America. <http://www.aafa.org>

Inland Food Allergy Support Team. Local eastern Washington support group. www.i-fast.org