ALLERGY AWARENESS TRAINING
WHAT SCHOOL STAFF NEED TO KNOW

BELMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

September 2017
OBJECTIVES OF TRAINING

- Understand the seriousness of life threatening allergies
- Learn to recognize life threatening allergy reactions
- Know how to react in an emergency situation
- Learn strategies to minimize risk of exposure
- Understand the challenges in schools
WHAT IS ANAPHYLAXIS?

- Medical name for a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death
  
  (a-na-fi-LAX-is)

- A severe life threatening allergic reaction affecting multiple systems of the body

- Anaphylaxis can occur immediately or up to two hours following allergen exposure

- Food allergy is the leading cause of anaphylaxis
  
  - 200,000 Emergency Room visits per year
  - 300,000 ambulatory-care visits a year among children under the age of 18
  - 150-200 deaths per year
LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY REACTION

CAN OCCUR WITH:

- FOOD
- MEDICATION
- INSECT STING/BITE
- LATEX
- UNKNOWN TRIGGERS
FOOD ALLERGY

- Eight foods account for 90% of all reactions:
  - Milk
  - Egg
  - Soy
  - Wheat
  - Peanut
  - Tree Nut
  - Fish
  - Shellfish

- But **almost any food can cause a reaction**
FOOD ALLERGY

- Most reactions are caused by ingestion
- Localized reactions are caused by touch
- Inhalation reactions are possible, but very rare
  - Cooking fumes
  - Peanut dust
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF AN ALLERGIC REACTION

- **MOUTH**: itching and swelling of the lips, tongue and mouth

- **THROAT**: itching and/or tightness in throat; cough or hoarseness

- **SKIN**: hives, itchy red rash, swelling about the face or extremities
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF AN ALLERGIC REACTION

- **STOMACH:** cramps, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea

- **LUNGS:** shortness of breath, voice change, wheezing, difficulty swallowing, coughing, throat clearing

- **HEART:** “thready pulse”, “passing out”

- **OTHER:** weakness, sense of impending doom
HOW A CHILD MIGHT DESCRIBE A REACTION

- The food is too spicy
- My tongue is hot (or burning)
- Something is poking my tongue
- My tongue is tingling, burning or itches
- My tongue feels like there is hair on it
- There’s something stuck in my throat
- My tongue feels full (or heavy)
- My lips feel tight
- It feels like bugs in my ear (itchy ear)
- My throat feels thick
- It feels like a bump is on the back of my tongue
EPINEPHRINE (ADRENALINE)

- First line of defense for a severe reaction
- Prescribed as an epinephrine auto-injector
- **NOT GIVING EPINEPHRINE OR A DELAY IN ITS USE IS THE KEY MISTAKE IN FATAL REACTIONS**
- Adverse reactions to **epinephrine** are rare
WHEN A REACTION OCCURS

- Give epinephrine
- Call 911 for transport to an emergency department **ALWAYS !!!**
- Call the parents or guardian
Currently there are three different versions of epinephrine auto-injector we commonly see:
- EpiPen™ and EpiPen Junior™
- Auvi –Q® red or blue
- Lineage Therapeutics orange or yellow
EPIPENS

- **EpiPen™** 66 lbs or more
  YELLOW

- **EpiPen Junior™**
  30 – 66 lbs  GREEN

*Please view the EpiPen how-to-use video* found under the “Epinephrine Auto-Injector Videos” section of Required Training
Auvi-Q®

- Auvi-Q 0.3 mg (red) patients greater than or equal to 30 kg (66 lbs)
- Auvi-Q 0.15 mg (blue) patients 15 to 30 kg (33 lbs – 66 lbs)

*Please view the Auvi-Q how-to-use video* found under the “Epinephrine Auto-Injector Videos” section of Required Training
Lineage Therapeutics

- Yellow epinephrine auto-injector 0.3 mg
- Orange epinephrine auto-injector 0.15 mg

Please view the Lineage Therapeutics how-to-use video found under the “Epinephrine Auto-Injector Videos” section of Required Training
BE PREPARED TO R.E.Act

- **RECOGNIZE** signs of anaphylaxis
- **EPINEPHRINE** know how to use an EpiPen
- **ACTIVATE** emergency response – call 911
REACTIONS CAN BECOME FATAL FAST

- Reactions can escalate from mild to severe in minutes
- Subsequent reactions may be as or more severe than initial reaction
- Approximately 3 out of 4 persons who have one reaction will have another
SCHOOL PLANNING

- Consult the School Nurse with specific allergen questions
- Enforce no food sharing or trading- **classrooms should remain free from foods** at the middle and high school per district policy
- Encourage hand washing before and after eating
- Create an allergen-free space or table as needed or requested
- Avoid the use of allergens for arts and crafts projects, science experiments, special events or celebrations
SCHOOL PLANNING

School Nurses will arrange a meeting with appropriate school staff to discuss the following:

- Review of student health care plan
- Recognizing or treating a reaction
- Assuring EpiPen is readily accessible
- Including food allergic students in all activities
- Educating classmates to avoid bullying children with food allergies
- Avoiding cross contact (cooking, serving)
- Reading food labels
- Cleaning surfaces
REGULATIONS

- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Department of Public Health regulations provide for the administration of EpiPen by non-medical persons who have been properly trained by the school nurse.

- School based training sessions will be announced by your school nurse in September.
REGULATIONS

- Require that all students with a medical diagnosis of a life threatening allergy have an Emergency Health Care Plan on file in the school

- School nurses will provide this Emergency Health Care Plan to teaching staff as appropriate

- A responsible staff member trained to carry out the Emergency Health Care Plan MUST accompany a student on a field trip
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Plan ahead and consult with the School Nurse for special events and situations:

- Substitute Teachers
- Field Trips
- Sports/Field days
- Extracurricular Activities
- Evacuation/ Relocation
TEENS: A SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Teens are a high-risk group for severe or fatal reactions:

- Peer pressure to be “normal”
- Forget to carry medication
- Going off alone
- Not knowing what to do
- Not recognizing signs or symptoms
- Friends not knowing what to do
TAKE HOME POINTS

- Anaphylaxis happens
- Be vigilant
- Trust your gut (if something doesn’t feel right, it probably isn’t)
- Know your role in an emergency
- Support students with life threatening allergies
- Time is critical
- Epinephrine is the first line of treatment
REFERENCES

- Massachusetts Department of Public Health, School Health Unit

- EpiPen Training and Instruction  www.EpiPen.com

- Managing Life Threatening Food Allergies in Schools 2002
  www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/allergy.pdf

- Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN)
  www.foodallergy.org.

- Belmont Public Schools Guidelines
  www.belmont.k12.ma.us/health/policies