

**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



Epinephrine Auto-Injector

- 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 <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/community-health/primarycare-healthaccess/school-health/>
- 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