

St. Joseph Public Schools

PROTOCOL AND GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES (LTAs) IN THE ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Overview of Allergic Reactions

Allergic reactions can span a wide range of symptoms and severity. The most severe and potentially life-threatening reaction is anaphylaxis. This protocol is to be used for students who are at risk for anaphylaxis and in circumstances where a previously undiagnosed life-threatening allergic response occurs. Anaphylaxis is a potentially life-threatening medical condition occurring in allergic individuals after exposure to their specific allergens. Anaphylaxis refers to a collection of symptoms affecting multiple systems in the body, the most dangerous of which are breathing difficulties and a drop in blood pressure or shock, which are potentially fatal. The most common causes of anaphylaxis in children include allergies to:

- Foods (most commonly; peanuts, tree nuts, milk, dairy products, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish)
- Insect stings (yellow jackets, bees, wasps, hornets)
- Medications
- Latex

Anaphylaxis can occur immediately or up to two hours following allergen exposure, so it is important to:

- Identify student at risk.
- Have appropriate preventive policies.
- Be prepared to handle an emergency.

PURPOSE AND GOAL OF THE GUIDEBOOK

The St. Joseph Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life-threatening allergies, or prevent any harm to students in emergencies. SJPS are not “nut-free” environments; however, they are dedicated to working with parents and students to make appropriate accommodations. The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and maintain a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all groups of people within the system.

The goal of the St. Joseph Public Schools regarding Life Threatening Allergies is to engage in a system-wide effort to:

- Prepare for any allergic reactions.
- Respond appropriately to any allergy emergencies that arise.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The **Superintendent** and his/her staff shall be responsible for the following:

- Create a system-wide emergency plan for addressing life threatening allergic reactions.
- Provide annual in-service training and education on reducing food-allergy risks, recognizing food-allergy symptoms, and emergency procedures for staff.
- Training shall include, but not be limited to:
 - A description/definition of severe allergies and a discussion of the most common food, medication, latex and stinging insect bites.
 - The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis.
 - The correct use of an Epi-pen.
 - Specific steps to follow in the event of an emergency.
- Encourage a “**NO FOOD TRADING**” and “**NO UTENSIL SHARING**” in all schools with particular focus at the elementary school level.
- Administrators, in conjunction with the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) and the primary care provider/allergist prepare an Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan for any student with a life threatening allergy. The Plans will be reviewed by the administrator, the student’s parent(s)/guardian(s) and primary care provider and/or the student’s allergist.
- Provide and maintain LTA free tables in each elementary school cafeteria as needed by the Individual Health Care Plan. These tables will be designated by a universal symbol. These tables will be cleaned and sanitized. Food service personnel will use latex free gloves.
- Make the Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan available in the school office and a student’s homeroom at the elementary level and in the school office at the middle and high school. Recommend that parents/guardians attach a photograph of their student with a Life Threatening Allergy to their Allergy Action Plan.
- Submit to school bus drivers an LTA list of students who have life threatening allergies.
- Make Epi-pens (those prescribed to the students) available in the school office and in other clearly designated locations as specified in the AAP/IHCP. Students are allowed to carry their Epi-Pens on their person as allowed by the medication policy.
- Familiarize teachers with the AAP/IHCP of their students and any other staff member who has contact with student on a need-to-know basis.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

To the extent possible, the principal of each school shall be responsible for the following:

- Familiarize teachers with the Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan of their students and any other staff member who has contact with student on a need-to-know basis.
- In conjunction with administrators, provide in-service training and education for staff regarding life-threatening allergies, symptoms, risk reduction procedures and emergency procedures including demonstration on how to use the Epi-pen.
- Send letters to inform all parents regarding Life Threatening Allergies (K-5).
- Discuss Life Threatening Allergies at Kindergarten orientation and the protocol of St. Joseph Public Schools.
- Post the school's emergency protocol on LTAs in appropriate locations in buildings as well as on the school website.
- Notify staff the locations of Epi-pens in the school.
- A contingency plan will be in place and understood by all staff and students in the event the administrator is not in the office or in the building. Call 911.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

The administrator is the primary coordinator of each student's plan.

Each administrator will have the following responsibilities:

- On request of parent(s)/guardian(s), meet with parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student with an LTA and develop an Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan for the student. During meetings with parent(s)/guardian(s), administrators shall discuss and encourage the use of MEDIC-ALERT bracelets and other methods of identification for students with LTAs.
- Maintain updated AAP/IHCPs in the school office, and in student's homeroom at each school and in the school office at the middle and high school.
- Assist the principal in providing information about students with LTAs to staff.
- In conjunction with the principal, provide in-service training and education for staff regarding life-threatening allergies, symptoms, risk reduction procedures and emergency procedures including demonstration on how to use the Epi-pen.
- On a need-to-know basis, familiarize teachers (and any other staff member who has contact with the student) with the Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan of their students.
- Follow Department of Public Health regulations governing the administration of prescription medications and follow the regulations that permit registration of non-licensed personnel to be trained and to administer Epi-pens.
- Discuss with parent(s)/guardian(s) the appropriate locations for storing the Epi-pen and the possibility of receiving more than one Epi-pen as necessary.
- Inform the school principal and parent(s)/guardian(s) if any student experiences an allergic reaction for the first time in school.
- Put into place emergency protocol in the event the administrator is not in the building.
- Annual review of the guidelines.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS

Each teacher shall have the following responsibilities:

- Receive and review the Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan, in collaboration with the administrator and parent(s)/guardian(s) of any student(s) in your classroom with Life Threatening Allergies.
- Leave information in an organized, prominent and accessible format for substitute teacher.
- Participate in in-service training for students with life-threatening allergies in collaboration with the building principal, and input from the parents, of the allergic child.
- Set a classroom protocol regarding the management of food in the classroom.
- Participate in the planning of a student's re-entry to school after an anaphylactic reaction.
- Prepare an LTA folder for a Substitute Teacher which includes the Allergy Action Plan for students in the classroom that have LTAs, the names of the students in the class with LTAs, and identify another staff member that will assist the substitute in the event of an allergic reaction.
- At the beginning of the school year, send home a letter (please use the letter template provided in this guidebook) to the parent(s)/guardian(s) student in your classroom has a LTA and ask for cooperation in eliminating the allergy causing food from snacks brought into the classroom for their student as well as classroom parties.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOOD SERVICE PERSONNEL

The food services department shall have the following responsibilities:

- Present food that is free of peanut/tree nuts to the best of their knowledge.
- Supply cleaning materials for washing and sanitizing tables.
- Provide a separate nut-free table for parent(s)/guardian(s) requesting one for their student(s).
- Provide in-service for food service employees regarding safe food handling practices to avoid cross-contamination with potential food allergens.
- Wear non-latex gloves.
- Participate in in-service training for students with life-threatening allergies.
- Post all LTA students, along with their picture, in a location where staff members can view but not visible to the public.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION

The school bus drivers shall have the following responsibilities:

- Inform each driver that he/she is transporting a child with an LTA.
- Provide functioning emergency communication devices (e.g., cell phones, two-way radios, etc.) on each bus.
- Maintain a policy of no food eating on the bus.
- Participate in in-service training for student(s) with life-threatening allergies.
- Maintain a list of students with LTA's on the bus.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS IN CHARGE OF CONDUCTING AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (e.g. before or after school activity instructors, coaches, babysitters, camp counselors, etc.)

Persons in charge of extracurricular programs shall have the following responsibilities:

- Read the Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan provided by the parents.
- For school sponsored activities (athletics, music, etc.) coaches/individuals in charge will participate in the in-service training for LTA's.

RESPONSIBILITIES DURING RECESS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES

During recess and physical education classes, recess monitors and P.E. teachers shall have the following responsibilities:

- Ensure that all children are under the supervision of at least one adult.
- Take an Epi-pen outside if specified in the child's AAP/IHCP.
- Participate in in-service training for students with life-threatening allergies.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FIELD TRIPS

Field trip personnel shall have the following responsibilities when LTA students go on field trips.

- Take into consideration the risk for allergen exposure, and ensure that parents evaluate potential risks when determining whether their child should attend a field trip.
- Store lunches in a safe place so that children cannot access them until the appropriate time. Lunches of children with food allergies should be stored separately to minimize cross contamination.
- A copy of the LTA plan should be taken on the field trip with a copy for the teacher and a separate copy for the chaperone.
- Rescue medication must be taken on all field trips.

RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PTO

For PTO sponsored school activities:

- PTO Board president will be provided a list of students that have LTAs in the school by the building principal along with a copy of each LTA student's Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan.
- Ensure all PTO program leaders have knowledge of the LTA students in the building and have access to the Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Each parent of a student with an LTA shall have the following responsibilities:

- Inform the administrator and building secretary of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after a diagnosis).
- Arrange to meet with the administrator to develop an Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan (AAP/IHCP) for the student and provide a signed medical report from the child's treating physician.
- Provide the school a list of foods and ingredients to be avoided, and provide a list of safe or acceptable foods that can be served to your child.
- Provide the administrator and building secretary with enough up-to-date emergency medications (including Epi-pens) so they can be placed in all required locations for the current school year.
- Complete and submit all required medication forms.
- Provide a Medic ALERT ID for your child.
- Notify administrator and building secretary of upcoming field trip as soon as possible and provide Epi-pen to be taken on field trips as stated in the field trip policy.
- Encourage students to wash hands before and after handling food.
- Teach your child to
 - Recognize the first symptoms of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction
 - Know where the epinephrine auto-injector is kept and who has access to the epinephrine
 - Communicate clearly as soon as he/she feels a reaction is starting.
 - Carry his/her own epinephrine auto-injector when appropriate
 - Not share snacks, lunches or drinks
 - Understand the importance of hand-washing before and after eating
 - Report teasing, bullying and threats to adult authority
 - Take as much responsibility as possible for his/her own safety

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS ..continued

Each parent of a student with an LTA shall have the following responsibilities:

- As children get older, teach them to:
 - Communicate the seriousness of the allergy
 - Communicate symptoms as they appear
 - Read labels
 - Administer own epinephrine auto-injector and be able to train others in its use
- Inform the administrator and the building secretary of any changes in the child's LTA status.
- Provide the school with the licensed provider's statement if the student no longer has allergies.
- Go on field trips and out of school activities with your child, whenever possible.
- Provide bag of snacks for your child's classroom along with safe foods for special occasions.
- Provide appropriate lunches if accommodations cannot be made in the cafeteria for the child's allergy.
- If you child participates in an after-school club (chess, soccer, language, etc.), meet with the club leader to review the Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan with them.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

Each student with a Life Threatening Allergy shall be responsible for the following:

- Take responsibility for avoiding allergens.
- Do not trade or share foods.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear.
- Take more responsibility for your allergies as you get older.
- Develop a relationship with the administrator and/or another trusted adult in the school to assist in identifying issues related to the management of the allergy in the school.