

Croton-Harmon School District Anaphylaxis Guidelines

Intent

Croton-Harmon is committed to the safety and health of all students and employees. The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- Provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students with allergies
- Reduce the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions
- Ensure a rapid and effective response in the case of a severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reaction
- Protect the rights of allergic students to participate in all school activities

The level of sensitivity and the types and severity of reactions vary considerably among individuals with allergies. Therefore the school's approach to preventing and treating allergies must be tailored to those individual's needs. At the same time, an undiagnosed student may experience an allergic reaction for the first time while at school and any allergic reaction can turn life-threatening. Therefore the school's approach must also be comprehensive.

Definitions and Background Information

Anaphylaxis is an acute allergic reaction that affects more than one system of the body. It is a life-threatening event. If someone exhibits difficulty breathing, a drop in blood pressure, or symptoms in more than one body system (cutaneous, respiratory, gastrointestinal, or cardiovascular) after possible exposure to an allergen, it should be considered anaphylaxis. Medical attention and treatment should be sought immediately. Treatment of anaphylaxis is centered on treating the rapidly progressing effects of the histamine release in the body with epinephrine. The allergen should also be removed immediately.

Emergency Health Care Plan (EHCP) means a set of procedural guidelines that provides specific directions about what to do in a particular emergency situation.

Epinephrine (also known as Adrenaline) is the treatment of choice to treat anaphylaxis. It can help reverse the symptoms and prevent progression to other symptoms. If symptoms of anaphylaxis are present it should be given immediately.

Epinephrine auto-injector (sometimes called EpiPen or Auvi-Q) is a device that is used for the automatic injection of epinephrine into the human body.

Food allergy is an abnormal, adverse reaction to a food that is triggered by the body's immune system. The immune system responds to an otherwise harmless food as if it were harmful, resulting in the release of various chemicals, including histamines. The most common food allergies are to peanut, tree nuts, milk soy, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, and wheat.

Other common allergens may include insect bite/sting, latex, and medications.

Allergy symptoms are manifestations of the allergic reaction in various parts of the body. Symptoms may affect:

- The cutaneous system: skin inflammation, tingling, itching, hives, rash, redness, swelling of the lips, tongue and/or throat
- The respiratory system: runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing
- The gastrointestinal tract: nausea, abdominal cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
- The cardiovascular system: drop in blood pressure, dizziness, lightheadedness, heartbeat irregularities, fainting, shock

Symptoms can begin immediately upon or up to two hours after, exposure to an allergen. Some individuals exhibit initial symptoms followed by a second phase of symptoms two to four hours later. If more than one system is affected, it is considered anaphylaxis.

Food Allergy Action Plan means a comprehensive plan for the care of students with special health care needs, including food allergies. These plans may include both preventive measures and treatment options.

Food Allergy Action Plans and Emergency Health Care Plans

In all schools in the Croton-Harmon School District an Individual Food Allergy Action Plan shall be developed for each student identified, and documented by a NYS medical provider, with a food allergy with potentially life-threatening consequences. The school nurse will develop these plans in collaboration with the student's health care provider, the parents/guardians of the student, and the student (if appropriate).

And ECP shall be written for all students with any potentially life threatening allergy.

These plans should include both preventative measures to help avoid accidental exposure to allergens and emergency measures in case of exposure.

Depending on the nature and extent of the student's allergy, the measures taken may include, but are not limited to:

- Posting additional signs (e.g. in classroom entryways);
- Notifying parents prior to the start of school if their child will be placed in the classroom of a student with a severe allergy
- Notifying the parent of the student with any severe allergy before food is served in the class
- Designating special tables in the cafeteria;
- Prohibiting particular food items from certain classrooms;
- Educating school personnel and students about food allergies
- Implementing particular protocols around cleaning surfaces touched by food products, garbage, washing of hands after eating, etc.

These measures shall be reviewed and updated at least annually, as well as after any serious allergic reaction that may occurred at school or at a school sponsored activity. These measures may vary from building to building.

Posting of Signs

In all schools in Croton-Harmon, signs shall be posted in a conspicuous place at every point of entry to the cafeteria facility, advising that there are students with allergies to peanuts/tree-nuts. In addition a well posted designated table in the school cafeteria will be available.

Staff Training

In all schools in Croton-Harmon School District, the principal along with the school nurse shall identify school personnel who might be involved in managing an emergency in a school, including anaphylaxis. Training shall be provided for these personnel on the signs and symptoms of anaphylactic shock, proper epinephrine auto-injector administration, adverse reactions, accessing the "911" emergency medical system and preparation for movement and transport of the student.

Communication

In all schools in the Croton-Harmon School District the principal shall ensure that all school employees and other adults, including but not limited to: school nurse, classroom teachers, specialty teachers, aides, student teachers, substitute teachers, lunch aides, custodial staff, recess monitors, and coaches who may be involved in the care of a student diagnosed with a life threatening allergy shall be informed of the Food Allergy Action Plan and/or Emergency Health Care Plan, as appropriate. These individuals should understand and consistently follow plans and protocols, be able to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction, know what to do in an emergency, and work with other staff to eliminate the use of allergens in the allergic student's snacks, meals, educational tools, arts and crafts projects, or incentives.

The principal shall work with the transportation director to ensure that school buses are equipped with required communication devices and that drivers are properly trained to recognize symptoms of allergic reactions and know what to do in case of an emergency. The no eating policy on buses should be enforced, with appropriate exceptions made to accommodate diabetic students and others with special needs.

Self-Management

In all schools in the Croton-Harmon School District each child at risk for anaphylaxis shall be allowed to carry an epinephrine auto-injector with him/her at all times, after a NYS medical provider has attested in writing that the student be deemed able to self-carry and self-administer if appropriate. If this is not appropriate, the epinephrine auto-injector shall be kept in a conspicuous place in the health office.

Emergency Protocols and Standing Orders

In all schools in the Croton-Harmon School District, the school physician shall issue a standing order for the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector by the school nurse for anyone who has not been previously medically identified for the treatment of anaphylaxis. Administration of epinephrine is ALWAYS followed by a "911" call initiating emergency medical services.

In the event of an episode of anaphylaxis, the principal shall verbally notify the student's parents/guardians as soon as possible or delegate someone to notify them. Following the episode the school nurse shall document the event.

Allergy Bullying

All threats or harassment of students with food allergies will be taken very seriously and will be dealt with in accordance with the Croton-Harmon school code of conduct.