



# Tips for Managing Food Allergies in the Cafeteria

*Food Allergy Awareness Webinar*

05.18.2023 | Lisvette García, Management Analyst

# Baseline Knowledge Check

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# Disclaimer

The information in this training is for educational purposes only. You should always seek the advice of a physician or other healthcare professional before making medical decisions or when you have any question regarding a medical condition. You should not rely on any information contained in this program as a substitute for professional medical advice or diagnosis. Therefore, you should consult with a physician for individual diagnosis and treatment.

There may be situations where students have been given medical recommendations that differ from those outlined in this program. In these cases, individualized instructions for risk reduction strategies and treatment of a reaction should be provided in writing by the student's physician and attached to the "*Action Plan for Anaphylaxis*" that is provided to the health suite staff. Parents of children with food allergies should discuss individualized plans with school staff, health suite personnel, and caregivers.

# Agenda

- Overview of Legislation
- Food Allergy 101
- Identifying and Responding to Anaphylaxis
- Four Key Strategies to Prevent Anaphylaxis in the School Cafeteria
- Food Allergy Resources for Food Service Staff



# Overview of Legislation

# DC Legislation Passed in Response to A Growing Concern

The DC Council passed legislation, **Access to Emergency Epinephrine in Schools Amendment Act of 2015**, to require District public and public charter schools to have:

- (1) undesignated epinephrine auto-injectors stocked; and
- (2) school staff certified in recognizing anaphylactic symptoms and administering emergency epinephrine.

# Epinephrine in Schools Program

- The program was created to assist schools in complying with the **Access to Emergency Epinephrine in Schools Amendment Act of 2015**.
- Each School/LEA is required to have:
  - An Epinephrine Liaison
  - A minimum of two staff members, besides health suite personnel, per school certified each year in the administration of epinephrine.
  - Four epinephrine auto-injectors to be used in the event of an anaphylactic emergency.



# Food Allergy 101

# Prevalence of Food Allergies

- In the United States, there are 32 million individuals with food allergies, including 5.6 million children under age 18. That's one in 13 children, or roughly two in every classroom.
- More than 15 percent of school-aged children with food allergies have had a reaction in school.
- Approximately 25 percent of severe food allergy reactions at school happen to students with no previous known food allergy.
- Individuals with food allergies who also have asthma may be at increased risk for severe or fatal food allergy reactions.
- Studies show that African American children are at significantly greater risk of developing food allergy. African American and Latino children received less follow-up care for food allergy from an allergy specialist and had higher rates of food allergy related anaphylaxis and emergency room visits.

# Food Allergy 101

- Food allergies may limit a major life activity and may qualify an individual for protection under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
- An allergy is an exaggerated or abnormal response to a substance known as an allergen.
- Allergens can enter the body in four ways:
  - Skin contact
  - Ingestion
  - Inhalation
  - Injection
- The response triggered by allergies varies by person, exposure, incident, and allergen.
- **Anaphylaxis** is a severe, systemic allergic reaction.
- Hospitalizations for anaphylaxis are on the rise.

# Common Allergens That Cause Anaphylaxis

## Food Allergens



Tree Nuts



Peanuts



Shellfish



Fish



Wheat



Eggs



Soy



Milk



Sesame

## Non-Food Allergens



Insect Stings



Latex



Medications



Exercise

# Food Allergies vs. Food Intolerances

## Food Allergy

- Involves the immune system
- Typically presents with a sudden onset
- Small amount of food can cause anaphylaxis
- Happens every time the food is consumed
- **Can become life-threatening**

## Food Intolerance

- Involves the digestive system
- Typically presents with a gradual onset
- Occurs when a lot of the food is eaten, or if the food is eaten often
- **Generally not life-threatening**

# Basic Medical Facts

- There is no cure for food allergies.
- Individuals with known allergies should avoid exposure to the allergens to prevent reactions.
- An individual may be allergic to a food, yet have no knowledge that the allergy has developed. Exposure is how an allergy is discovered.
- Responses develop and progress differently with each exposure.
- Any amount of exposure to an allergen may cause anaphylaxis.
- Anaphylaxis can develop immediately or occur over the course of several hours.

# Impact of Food Allergy on Quality of Life



Food allergies have an impact on the mental, social, and emotional well-being of children with food allergies, their parents, and caregivers. Many feel fear, anxiety, and worry.



Families make adjustments in decision-making and daily routines. Activities such as birthday parties, traveling, dining out, and entertainment present challenges for parents and they might decide to skip these activities.



Caring for children with food allergies costs the U.S. nearly \$25 billion annually. Some families have had to make career decisions, which have led to a negative financial impact for the household. Families also experience significant time burden.



## Identifying and Responding to Anaphylaxis

# Identifying Anaphylaxis

## Mouth

- Itchy, tingling, swelling of lips/tongue

## Nose

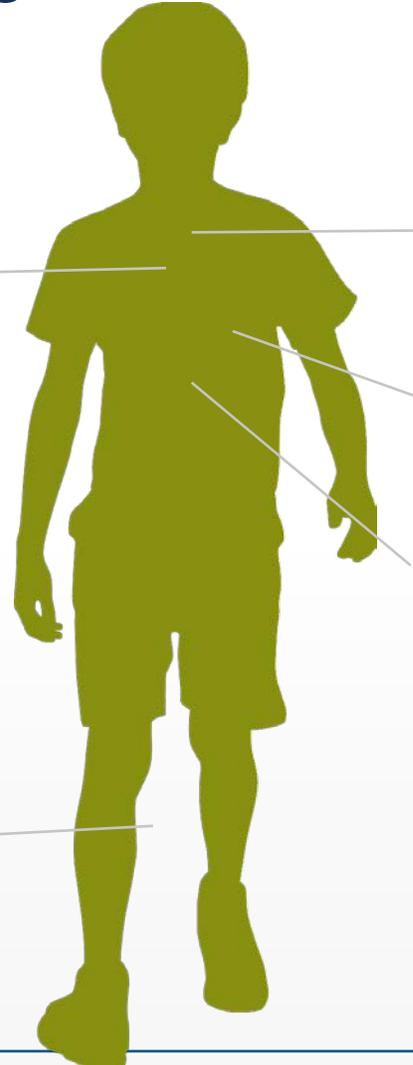
- Hay fever-like symptoms: runny, itchy nose; sneezing; and/or watery, red eyes

## Skin

- Hives, rash, redness, itching
- Flushing (redness and warmth)
- Swelling of face or extremities

## Gut

- Cramps/pain
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea



## Throat

- Hoarseness
- Tightening of throat, difficulty swallowing
- Hacking cough

## Heart

- Low blood pressure, weak pulse
- Pale, blue color
- Dizzy, fainting
- Rapid Heart Rate

## Lungs

- Shortness of breath, wheezing
- Repetitive, hacking cough
- Tightening of the chest

## Mental

- Anxiety, “sense of impending doom”
- Lethargy

# Responding to Anaphylaxis

- **Immediate administration of epinephrine** is the first line of defense against anaphylactic reactions.
- If you suspect an allergic reaction, or the student has accidental allergen exposure, activate the student's emergency care plan immediately and call the school nurse or administrator. Never send a student with a suspected allergic reaction to the school nurse alone.
- Always call 9-1-1 after administering epinephrine. Observation in the emergency room is critical.

**If a parent/guardian refuses emergency department visit for their child, school should obtain their refusal in writing.**



## Four Key Strategies to Prevent Anaphylaxis in the School Cafeteria

# Overview of Four Key Strategies

1. Identify students with known food allergies.
2. Read food labels.
3. Prevent cross-contact of possible food allergens.
4. Promote communication and teamwork.

# Identify Students

- Use point of purchase alerts to identify students with food allergies.
- Work with the school nurse or administrator to identify students with food allergies in a way that does not compromise students' privacy or confidentiality rights.
- Make nutrition information available to students, families and school nurse.
- Manage food substitutions for students with food allergies.

# Read Food Labels

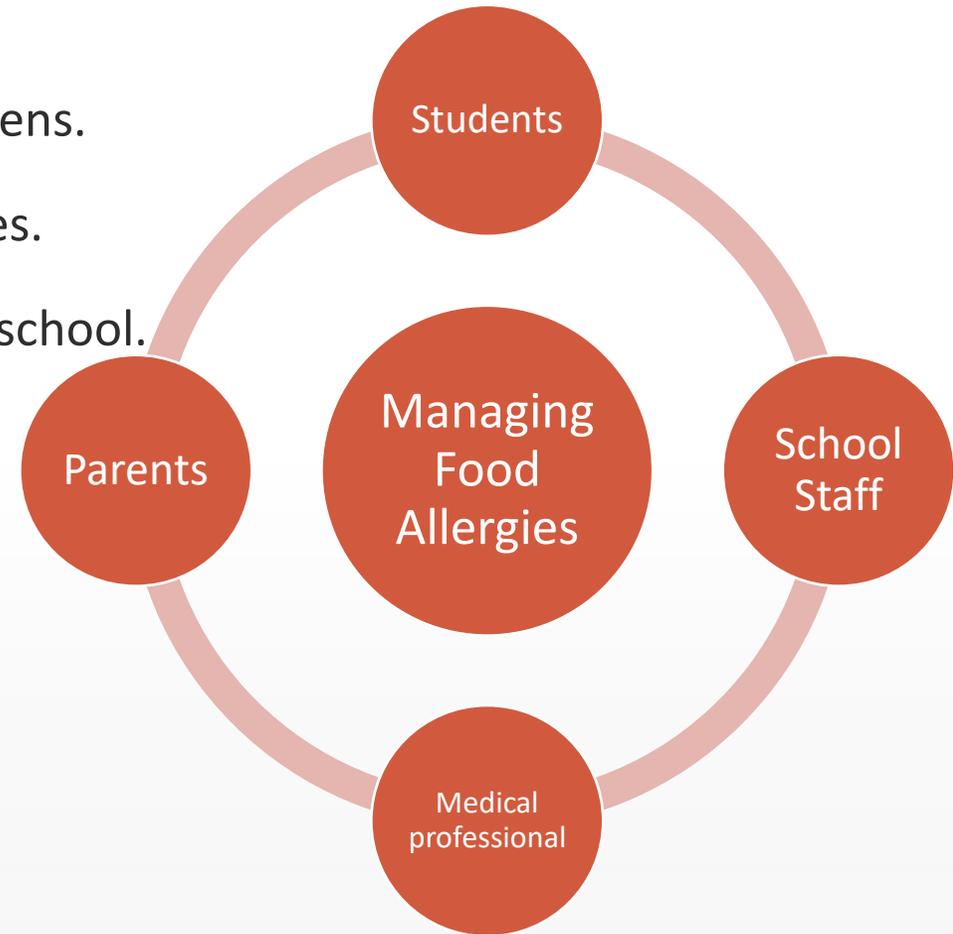
- Understand how to read food labels to identify allergens.
- 3 ways to identify allergens in labels:
  - Allergen common name listed in the ingredients
    - Example: Milk, fish, shrimp, walnuts, sesame
  - In parentheses when ingredient is a less common form of the allergen
    - Example: Whey protein (milk), lecithin (soy), natural flavors (almond)
  - Using the word “contains” followed by the name of allergen listed after ingredients
    - Example: Contains: Milk, soy and almond
- Phrases like “peanut free” and “egg-free” are not regulated. Always check ingredient list and, if needed, contact manufacturer.

# Prevent Cross-contact

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after preparing and serving food.
- Clean and sanitize any surface that comes into contact with food with soap and water or all-purpose cleaning agents.
- Discourage sharing food, drinks or utensils.
- Use utensils, cutting boards and pans that have been thoroughly washed with soap and water.
- Consider using separate utensils and dishes for making and serving safe foods. You may choose a different color to identify the safe kitchen tools.
- If you are making several foods, cook the allergy-safe foods first.
- Keep the safe foods covered and away from other foods that may splatter.
- Label and store allergen-free items separately (use color-coding).
- Designate allergen-free area to prepare meals.

# Promote Communication and Teamwork

- Implement an inclusive team approach.
- Follow student’s medical statement to avoid food allergens.
- Make meal modifications for students with food allergies.
- Share information about ingredients in foods served at school.



# Summary of Four Key Actions

1. Identify students with known food allergies.
2. Read food labels.
3. Prevent cross-contact of possible food allergens.
4. Promote communication and teamwork.

# Recap

- Overview of Legislation
- Food Allergy 101
- Identifying and Responding to Anaphylaxis
- Strategies to Prevent Anaphylaxis in the School Cafeteria
- Food Allergy Resources for Food Service Staff

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Questions?

# Resources

- OSSE Allergy Management in Schools
  - [osse.dc.gov/page/allergy-management-schools](https://osse.dc.gov/page/allergy-management-schools)
  - [osse.dc.gov/node/1658936](https://osse.dc.gov/node/1658936)
- American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
  - [aaaai.org/conditions-and-treatments/allergies/anaphylaxis](https://aaaai.org/conditions-and-treatments/allergies/anaphylaxis)
- American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
  - [acaai.org/allergies/types/food-allergy](https://acaai.org/allergies/types/food-allergy)
- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA)
  - [aafa.org/asthma/living-with-asthma/asthma-allergies-and-the-american-with-disabilities-act/](https://aafa.org/asthma/living-with-asthma/asthma-allergies-and-the-american-with-disabilities-act/)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
  - [cdc.gov/healthyyouth/foodallergies](https://cdc.gov/healthyyouth/foodallergies)
  - [cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/toolkit.htm](https://cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/toolkit.htm)
  - [cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/pdf/20\\_316712-D\\_FA\\_nutrition\\_508tagged.pdf](https://cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/pdf/20_316712-D_FA_nutrition_508tagged.pdf)



# Resources (Continued)

- Food Allergy Research and Education (FARE)
  - [foodallergy.org/resources/facts-and-statistics#:~:text=Researchers%20estimate%20that%2032%20million,roughly%20two%20in%20every%20classroom](https://foodallergy.org/resources/facts-and-statistics#:~:text=Researchers%20estimate%20that%2032%20million,roughly%20two%20in%20every%20classroom)
  - [foodallergy.org/resources/state-state-data-food-allergy](https://foodallergy.org/resources/state-state-data-food-allergy)
  - [foodallergy.org/resources/how-read-food-label](https://foodallergy.org/resources/how-read-food-label)
  - [foodallergy.org/resources/avoiding-cross-contact](https://foodallergy.org/resources/avoiding-cross-contact)
- Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Connection Team (FAACT)
  - [foodallergyawareness.org/civil-rights-advocacy/schools/usda-regulations/](https://foodallergyawareness.org/civil-rights-advocacy/schools/usda-regulations/)
- Kids with Food Allergies/Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America
  - [kidswithfoodallergies.org/living-with-food-allergies/planning-for-school/resources-for-school-care-centers/](https://kidswithfoodallergies.org/living-with-food-allergies/planning-for-school/resources-for-school-care-centers/)
  - [kidswithfoodallergies.org/living-with-food-allergies/top-food-allergens/](https://kidswithfoodallergies.org/living-with-food-allergies/top-food-allergens/)
- National Association of School Nurses
  - [nasn.org/nasn-resources/practice-topics/allergies-anaphylaxis](https://nasn.org/nasn-resources/practice-topics/allergies-anaphylaxis)
- School Nutrition Association (SNA)
  - [schoolnutrition.org/resources/featured-resources/food-allergies/](https://schoolnutrition.org/resources/featured-resources/food-allergies/)



# Resources (Continued)

- The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN)
  - [theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/food-allergy-fact-sheets/](https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/food-allergy-fact-sheets/)
  - [theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/course/external/view/elearning/126/food-allergies-in-snps-reading-food-labels](https://theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/course/external/view/elearning/126/food-allergies-in-snps-reading-food-labels)
  - [theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/standard-operating-procedures/](https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/standard-operating-procedures/)
  - [theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/course/external/view/elearning/153/food-allergies-in-school-nutrition-programs-avoiding-cross-contact](https://theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/course/external/view/elearning/153/food-allergies-in-school-nutrition-programs-avoiding-cross-contact)
  - [theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/course/external/view/elearning/118/food-allergies-in-snps-general-food-allergies](https://theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/course/external/view/elearning/118/food-allergies-in-snps-general-food-allergies)
  - [theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/course/external/view/elearning/162/food-allergies-in-snps-accommodating-food-allergies-in-schools](https://theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/course/external/view/elearning/162/food-allergies-in-snps-accommodating-food-allergies-in-schools)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
  - [fns.usda.gov/fs/taking-action-build-food-safe-schools](https://fns.usda.gov/fs/taking-action-build-food-safe-schools)
  - [fns.usda.gov/fs/food-allergy-book-what-school-employees-need-know](https://fns.usda.gov/fs/food-allergy-book-what-school-employees-need-know)
  - [fns.usda.gov/cn/accommodating-disabilities-school-meal-programs-guidance-qas](https://fns.usda.gov/cn/accommodating-disabilities-school-meal-programs-guidance-qas)





Thank you!

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