

## 5.19

### Emergency Anaphylaxis Procedure

#### What is Anaphylaxis?

**Anaphylaxis** (pronounced "a-na-fi-LAX-is") is an allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and can be life-threatening. It occurs when someone comes into contact with a food or other triggers to which they are allergic. Accidental exposure to allergic triggers can happen anywhere in or outside school, and it's important to be prepared to use an epinephrine auto-injector and seek immediate medical care if a life-threatening allergic reaction occurs.

It is the **responsibility of the parent** upon registration to:

- Inform the school principal and staff of their child's allergy (and asthma).
- In a timely manner, complete medical forms (with both parent/caregiver and principal/teacher present) and the **Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan**, which includes a photograph, a description of the child's allergy, emergency procedure, contact information, and consent to administer medication.
- Advise the school if their child has outgrown an allergy or no longer requires an epinephrine auto-injector. (A letter from the child's allergist is required.)
- The **Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan** will be posted in key areas such as in the child's classroom (posted on the wall or inside a cupboard door), the office (bulletin board), the teacher's daybook, and inside the food preparation area. Parental permission will be required to post the child's plan.

If an anaphylactic emergency occurs, both the school's anaphylaxis plan and the child's Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan should be reviewed and amended as necessary.

The school principal is to monitor and report information about anaphylactic incidents to the board in aggregate form (to include number of at-risk anaphylactic students and number of anaphylactic incidents).

Children at risk of anaphylaxis who have demonstrated maturity should carry one auto-injector with them at all times and have back up available in the school. Most children are able to carry their own auto-injector and asthma inhaler (if needed) by grade one to two. For children with stinging insect allergy, this would not have to be for the full year but during insect season (warmer months).

Posters which describe signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and how to give an epinephrine auto-injector will be placed in relevant areas, e.g. classrooms, office,

staff room, lunch room or cafeteria. Additional auto-injectors should be brought on field trips. It is recommended that the organizer of the field trip carry a cell phone and know the location of the closest medical facility.

### **Training**

- Each year there will be training for staff, which includes an overview of anaphylaxis, signs and symptoms and a demonstration on the use of epinephrine. Staff will have an opportunity to practice using an auto-injector trainer (device used for training purposes) and are encouraged to practice with the auto-injector trainer throughout the year, especially if they have a student at risk in their class.
- Substitute teachers will be advised to review the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan for children in their class. The principal will speak with substitute teachers about the procedure for responding to emergency situations.
- Students will learn about anaphylaxis in special class presentations.

Special care will be taken to avoid exposure to allergy-causing substances. Teachers are to inform parents which foods can be brought into their classrooms. Given that anaphylaxis can be triggered by minute amounts of an allergen when ingested, children with food allergy must be encouraged to follow certain guidelines:

- Eat only food that they have brought from home unless it is packaged, clearly labelled and approved by their parents.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Not share food, utensils or containers.
- Place food on a napkin or wax paper rather than in direct contact with a desk or table.

### **Accidental injection**

Epinephrine auto-injectors should be injected into the muscle on the outer side of the thigh.

Before giving an injection, care should be taken to ensure that the **needle end** of the auto-injector is administered.

Accidental injection into the hands or feet may result in loss of blood flow to the affected area and should be avoided. If there is an accidental injection into these areas, the person should go immediately to the nearest emergency department

for treatment.

### **Colour**

Epinephrine should be clear in colour. If the solution is discolored, cloudy or contains particles, the auto-injector device should be replaced.

### **Expiry dates**

Auto-injector expiry dates should be checked regularly to ensure that the auto-injectors are current and effective. Always store epinephrine auto-injectors in the carrier tube with the safety release on until you need to use it.

- Keep EpiPen at room temperature. Do not refrigerate.
- EpiPen can be exposed to temperatures between 15°C to 30°C.
- Do not keep EpiPen in a vehicle during extremely hot or cold weather.
- Protect your EpiPen from light.