

WPS-3/7/2016-District Contact: Sherrie Stevens, M.Ed., Director of Student Services

WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROTOCOL AND GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES (LTAs)

OVERVIEW

Allergic reactions can span a wide range of severity of symptoms. The most severe and potentially life threatening reaction is anaphylaxis.

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 hours following allergen exposure, so it is important to:

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

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.

PURPOSE AND GOAL

The Westborough Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life threatening allergies. . The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and maintain and regularly update 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 sections below highlight the major responsibilities of the various groups, but each student's plan is individualized and therefore not all responsibilities are spelled out in this protocol.

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

- Prevent any occurrence of life threatening allergic reactions
- Prepare for any allergic reactions
- Respond appropriately to any allergy emergencies that arise

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WESTBOROUGH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

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

1. Create a system-wide emergency plan for addressing life threatening allergic reactions.
2. Provide annual in-service training and education on reducing food-allergy risks, recognizing food allergy symptoms, and emergency procedures for staff.
3. Training shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. A description/definition of severe allergies and a discussion of the most common food, medication, latex and stinging insect bites.
 - b. The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis
 - c. The correct use of an Epi-pen
 - d. Specific steps to follow in the event of an emergency
4. Encourage a “**NO FOOD TRADING**” and “**NO UTENSIL SHARING**” policy in all schools with particular focus at the elementary school level.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL, OR DESIGNEE

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

1. Students who present with life threatening allergies (LTAs) and who provide the school district with written documentation from a physician will be provided an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP). Students with LTAs that may substantially limit a major life activity that restricts access to the curriculum, or navigation of the school environment, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, may be referred for an evaluation of the student’s eligibility under Section 504 and, if eligible, the development of an individualized Section 504 Plan. If the student is determined ineligible under section 504, an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) will be developed and remain in place for the student. Parents do have the right to refuse consent to a section 504 evaluation and to request solely the development of an IHCP. Any such refusal of consent to evaluation shall be documented in a form provided by the district.
2. Provide and maintain LTA free tables in the school cafeteria, as warranted. These tables will be cleaned and sanitized.
3. Submit to school bus drivers an LTA list of students who have life threatening allergies.
4. Require all food service employees to use only latex free gloves.
5. Make Epi-pens (belonging to the school and those prescribed to the students) available in the nurse’s office and in other clearly designated locations as specified in the student’s individualized plan. At the secondary level, students determined by the nurse to be capable of self-administration shall be allowed to carry their Epi-pens on their person as allowed by the medication policy.
6. Familiarize teachers with the Section 504/IHCP Plan of their students and any other staff member who has contact with student on a need-to-know basis.
7. In conjunction with nurses, provide life-threatening allergy awareness education and epinephrine training education to staff based on the Department of Public Health and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
8. Post the school’s emergency protocol on LTAs in appropriate locations
9. Inform Superintendent of Schools if student requires community medical intervention -911 call

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL NURSES

Each school nurse will have the following responsibilities:

1. Participate in the development of a Section 504 Plan or IHCP for the student and maintain a copy of the most current 504 plan in the medical office. During meetings with parents/guardians, nurses shall discuss and encourage the use of MEDIC-ALERT bracelets and other methods of identification for students with LTA.
2. Assist the principal in providing information about students with LTAs to staff and 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.
3. The school nurse will be responsible for following Department of Public Health regulations governing the administration of prescription medications. Nurses are also responsible for following the Department of Public Health regulations that permit delegation to non-licensed personnel to administer an Epi-Pen to a student with LTA with a current medication order when a school nurse is not available.
 4. Inform the school principal and parent/guardian if any student experiences an allergic reaction for the first time in school.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS

Each teacher shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Receive and review the Section 504 Plans/Individual Health Care Plans of students for whom the teacher is responsible
2. Leave information in an organized, prominent and accessible format for a substitute teacher.
3. Participate in in-service training for students with life-threatening allergies
4. Establish classroom protocols and procedures regarding the management of food in the classroom.
5. Participate in the planning of a student's re-entry to school after an anaphylactic reaction

RESPONSIBILITIES OF FOOD SERVICE PERSONNEL. The food services department shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Supply cleaning materials for washing and sanitizing tables
2. Provide in-service training to food service employees regarding safe food handling practices to avoid cross-contamination with potential food allergens
3. Food service employees will wear non-latex gloves
4. Make available to parents and staff menus listing all ingredients of foods to be offered for purchase in the school cafeteria at least one week prior to the food service, including nutrition information about the top 8 food allergens
5. Food service manager is responsible for ensuring that any foods or ingredients taken under FDA advisement are removed from the school lunch menu and communicated to the district administrators.
6. Food service manager is responsible for rotating through schools on a monthly basis to monitor food administration and to ensure the implementation of best practices associated with this guideline.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF WESTBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS TRANSPORTATION

Westborough Public Schools transportation providers shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Inform each driver that s/he is transporting a child with an LTA
2. Ensure all drivers and bus monitors are trained regarding the use and administration of an Epi-Pen.
3. Provide functioning emergency communication devices (e.g., cell phones, two-way radios, etc.) on each bus
4. Maintain and enforce a policy prohibiting the eating or sharing of food on school buses.

RESPONSIBILITIES DURING RECESS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION/OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES & CLASSES

During recess and physical education classes, the school shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Children will be under the supervision of at least one adult

2. An Epi-pen will be taken outside if specified in the child's Section 504 Plan/IHCP
3. Provide staff who are outside for recess or a learning activity with a walkie-talkie or communication device that can contact the main office in the event of an emergency

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

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

1. Inform the school nurse of your child's allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after a diagnosis).
2. Provide, or authorize the Westborough Public Schools to obtain, medical information and documentation from the student's treating physician as needed to develop individualized plans for students.
3. Provide updates and written confirmation from the student's pediatrician regarding any modification of the student's plan or access to food in school that may be requested by the parent/guardian(s).
4. 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.
5. Provide the school nurse with enough up-to-date emergency medications (including Epipens) so they can be placed in all required locations for the current school year.
6. Complete and submit all required medication forms.
7. Provide a Medic ALERT ID for your child.
8. Teach your child to:
 - a. Recognize the first symptoms of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction
 - b. Know where the epinephrine auto-injector is kept and who has access to the epinephrine
 - c. Communicate clearly as soon as s/he feels a reaction is starting.
 - d. Carry his/her own epinephrine auto-injector when appropriate
 - e. Not share snacks, lunches or drinks
 - f. Understand the importance of handwashing before and after eating
 - g. Take as much responsibility as possible for his/her own safety
9. As children get older, encourage them to:
 - a. Communicate the seriousness of the allergy
 - b. Communicate symptoms as they appear
 - c. Read labels
 - d. administer his/her own epinephrine auto-injector and be able to train others in its use
10. Inform the school of any changes in the child's LTA status
11. Provide the school with the licensed provider's statement if the student no longer has allergies
12. Provide bag of snacks for your child's classroom along with safe foods for special occasions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

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

1. Take responsibility for avoiding allergens
2. Do not trade or share foods
3. Wash hands before and after eating.
4. Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction
5. Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear
6. Develop a relationship with the school nurse and/or another trusted adult in the school to assist in identifying issues related to the management of the allergy in the school.