

LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES

POLICY

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1.0 PRINCIPLES

- 1.1 Halifax Regional School Board will maximize the safety of students who may be subject to life-threatening allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis.
- 1.2 Plans shall be put in place to minimize the risk of anaphylactic reactions among students by information and awareness, avoidance and emergency response.
- 1.3 Anaphylaxis management is a shared responsibility that includes students with life-threatening allergies, their parent(s)/guardian(s), caregivers, and the entire school community.

2.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 The Halifax Regional School Board is committed to ensuring this policy is in accordance with the following acts and policies:
 - 2.1.1 *Nova Scotia Education Act*
 - 2.1.2 *C.006 Special Education Policy*
 - 2.1.3 *C.009 Administration of Medication Policy*
 - 2.1.4 *B.014 School Trips Policy*
 - 2.1.5 *C.011 Severe Medical Conditions Policy*
 - 2.1.6 *Student Records Policy*
 - 2.1.7 *Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools*

3.0 AUTHORIZATION

- 3.1 The superintendent is authorized to develop and implement procedures in support of this policy.

LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES PROCEDURES

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1.0 PRINCIPALS' RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 The principal shall:

1.1.1 Ensure that schools are allergen-aware;

1.1.1.1 Post signage that the school is allergen-aware.

1.1.2 Ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with life-threatening allergies are provided with the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan at registration and annually;

1.1.3 Ensure that parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a life-threatening allergy have completed the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan;

1.1.4 Ensure parent(s)/guardian(s) of children with life-threatening allergies complete Form A, Administration of Prescribed Medication to Students, *C.009 Administration of Medication Policy*;

1.1.5 Provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with criteria for documentation in the event the parent(s)/guardian(s) determine their child is not developmentally able to assume the responsibility of carrying the Epinephrine auto-injector on their person;

1.1.5.1 Signed documentation must be received by the parent /

guardian(s) stating they have read and understand the HRSB Life-Threatening Allergies Policy and Procedures C.012. The parent(s)/guardian(s) must indicate they are choosing to store their child's epinephrine auto-injector at school.

- 1.1.5.2 The agreement to store the student's epinephrine auto-injector at school must be reviewed annually in September.
- 1.1.6 Review policy and procedures and identify students with life-threatening allergies as part of opening day procedures with all staff;
 - 1.1.6.1 Establish a plan for informing substitute teachers, student teachers, and school volunteers of students with life-threatening allergies and their Anaphylaxis Emergency Plans.
- 1.1.7 Ensure that all staff members who require training in preparation for working with students with life-threatening allergies and for administering an epinephrine auto-injector, have such training provided;
- 1.1.8 Establish, and review with parent(s)/guardian(s), safe procedures for work experience, field trips, extracurricular activities and special events;
- 1.1.9 Post names and pictures of students with Anaphylaxis Emergency Plans in the office and staff room;
- 1.1.10 Have copies of Anaphylaxis Emergency Plans in a file, readily available in the office and staff room;
- 1.1.11 Maintain up-to-date emergency contact information;
- 1.1.12 Obtain one unassigned epinephrine auto-injector for emergency use in the school;
 - 1.1.12.1 The dose of epinephrine for the unassigned auto-injector will match that prescribed for the student(s) diagnosed with life-threatening allergies.
- 1.1.13 Store additional epinephrine auto-injectors in safe, unlocked and accessible locations;
 - 1.1.13.1 Inform staff of the location of epinephrine auto-injectors

and review emergency routines.

- 1.1.13.2 Ensure used Epinephrine auto-injectors are disposed of in a puncture-resistant container (sharps container).
- 1.1.14 Ensure safe lunchroom/cafeteria eating procedures, including adherence to cleaning guidelines for the removal of substances which may be considered life-threatening allergens;
- 1.1.15 Take into consideration students with life-threatening allergies when purchasing supplies and materials;
- 1.1.16 In the event of a student transfer, ensure all relevant information pertaining to the student's allergy is sent to the new school;
- 1.1.17 Take precautions to reduce student's risk of exposure to insect venom;
 - 1.1.17.1 Arrange for prompt removal of insect nests, ensuring grounds cleanliness, and close supervision of students when they are outside during bee/wasp season.
 - 1.1.17.2 Ensure exit doors remain closed during bee/wasp season.
- 1.1.18 When made aware that a student with a life-threatening allergy does not have their epinephrine auto-injector with them at school, contact parent(s)/guardian(s);
 - 1.1.18.1 Notify parent(s)/guardian(s) of their responsibility to transport the epinephrine auto-injector to school immediately.
- 1.1.19 Include a copy of the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan in the student's cumulative file.

2.0 SCHOOL STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 School staff shall:

- 2.1.1 Discuss life-threatening allergies with the class, in age-appropriate terms;
- 2.1.2 Discourage students from sharing or trading lunches or snacks;
- 2.1.3 Ensure steps be in place to protect the children with life-threatening

allergies during class celebrations and/or school events;

2.1.3.1.1 Notify parents of food-allergic children when food is involved in class activities.

2.1.4 Reinforce hand-washing with soap and water before and after eating;

2.1.5 Ensure that epinephrine auto-injectors are on the student when on school trips;

2.1.5.1 In the event there is an agreement for the epinephrine auto-injector to be stored at the school, a designated trained adult will carry the student's epinephrine auto-injector for the duration of the school trip.

2.1.6 Contact the principal if they become aware of a student with a life-threatening allergy who does not have their epinephrine auto-injector;

2.1.7 Complete an entry in Form C, Administration of Prescribed Medication, *C.009 Administration of Medication Policy* in the event that an epinephrine auto-injector was administered.

2.1.8 Take into consideration students with life-threatening allergies when using supplies and materials;

3.0 PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)' RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Parent(s)/guardian(s) of a child with a life-threatening allergy shall:

3.1.1 Inform the school of their child's allergy and complete the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan provided by the school annually;

3.1.2 Provide a photo of their child for the purpose of posting and placing it on the emergency plan;

3.1.3 Notify the school immediately if any changes occur to the plan such as contact information, change in allergies or change in epinephrine dose;

3.1.4 Be encouraged to provide a MedicAlert® bracelet or other means of medical identification for their child;

3.1.5 Provide the child with an up-to-date epinephrine auto-injector(s);

3.1.5.1 The epinephrine auto-injector(s) will be clearly labeled

with the child's name.

- 3.1.6 Ensure their child carries an epinephrine auto-injector on them when they are attending school, as developmentally able and according to ability;
 - 3.1.6.1 In the event the parent(s)/guardian(s) determines their child is not developmentally able to assume the responsibility of carrying their epinephrine auto-injector on their person, signed documentation will be submitted to the principal, annually in September.
 - 3.1.6.2 In the event that their child does not have their epinephrine auto-injector with them at school, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to transport the epinephrine auto-injector to school immediately.
- 3.1.7 Provide school with up-to-date contact information;
- 3.1.8 Provide support to school and teachers as requested;
- 3.1.9 Provide safe foods for the student on special occasions;
- 3.1.10 Educate their child as to safe procedures including:
 - 3.1.10.1 Strategies for avoiding exposure to allergens.
 - 3.1.10.2 Proper hand hygiene.
 - 3.1.10.3 Symptoms of an allergic reaction.
 - 3.1.10.4 How and when to tell an adult when there is an allergy related occurrence.
- 3.1.11 Complete Form A, Administration of Prescribed Medication to Students, *C.009 Administration of Medication Policy* annually and update as needed.

4.0 STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Students with a life-threatening allergy shall:
 - 4.1.1 Carry an epinephrine auto-injector device at all times while in school, participating in a school event, or on school trips;
 - 4.1.2 Take responsibility for avoiding relevant allergens, as age appropriate and according to ability;

- 4.1.3 Be encouraged to wear a MedicAlert® bracelet, or other means of medical identification;
- 4.1.4 Wash hands with soap and water before and after eating;
- 4.1.5 Promptly inform an adult, as soon as exposure to an allergen occurs or symptoms of an allergic reaction appear;
- 4.1.6 Know how to use the epinephrine auto-injector when age-appropriate (typically 7 years and up).

5.0 ALLERGIC REACTION RESPONSE

- 5.1 The following steps in order are to occur in the event of an allergic reaction:
 - 5.1.1 Give epinephrine auto-injector immediately;
 - 5.1.1.1 If the child wishes to self-administer the epinephrine auto-injector, the school staff will support this action and assist if necessary.
 - 5.1.2 Lay the child on his/her side;
 - 5.1.3 Call 9-1-1 and tell them someone is having a life-threatening allergic reaction;
 - 5.1.3.1 If a second person is available, stay with the student and delegate them to call 9-1-1.
 - 5.1.4 Give a second epinephrine auto-injector when available if the reaction continues or worsens in 5-15 minutes from the first dose of epinephrine;
 - 5.1.5 Ensure the student is transported to hospital immediately by ambulance for evaluation and observation;
 - 5.1.6 Call the student's emergency contacts indicated on the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan.

6.0 POLICY REVIEW

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years.

APPENDIX A

LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGIES

DEFINITIONS

- Allergen:** Any substance that can cause an allergic reaction.
- Anaphylaxis:** A severe allergic reaction to a substance. The reaction may cause swelling, skin redness, itchiness, difficulty breathing, restlessness, abdominal cramps, vomiting, diarrhea, a rapid heart rate, loss of consciousness, and/or death.
- Epinephrine:** A hormone that mimics the actions of the sympathetic nervous system in response to stress (“fight or flight” response). Epinephrine stimulates heart rate and contractility (squeezing ability of the heart), as well as opens the airways. It is the drug of choice to use in the treatment of anaphylaxis.
- Epinephrine auto-injector:** A device used to administer a specific, pre-measured dose of epinephrine intramuscularly (into a muscle).