

Ardsley School District - Ardsley Middle School
Food Allergies: Protocol for Managing Risk and Promoting Safety
(Updated February 2020)

I. Purpose of the protocols:

The Ardsley School District is committed to providing a safe environment for all students. Food allergies can be life threatening. We are committed to keeping students diagnosed with severe food allergies made known to the School safe. These clearly defined protocols have been designed to:

- Provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students with food 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; and
- Protect the rights of food allergic students to participate in all school activities.

At the middle school level, we strive to recognize the unique challenges students with food allergies face in school while also encouraging developmentally appropriate independence.

Together we can reduce the risk of accidental exposure to food allergens while students are at school. Effective prevention and treatment plans, proper procedures, well-trained staff and clear communication with families and staff can save lives.

II. Family's Responsibility:

● **Families of Students with Allergies**

- Parents should notify the school nurse of the presence of a food allergy with documentation from the student's licensed medical provider (physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner).
- Parents of students with food allergies need to fill out a [Food Allergy Action Plan](#) (FAAP) which can be downloaded from the school's website. The FAAP will be used as a guide in case of an allergic reaction.
- A parent and doctor need to sign the FAAP form at the start of the school year and/or throughout the school year as needed.
- The parent, together with the medical provider and school nurse, should determine if the student can self-carry and self-administer medication.
- For students who are not authorized to self-carry and self-administer medication, a parent must bring the medication to the school nurse in the

box from the pharmacy with the pharmacy label on it, and replace used and expired medications, as needed, in the same manner.

- For students who have been approved by doctor's orders and attestation to self administer, parents will provide an appropriate carrying case for the medication to be carried by the student throughout the school day (e.g lunch bag, drawstring bag, small hand bag) which will also clearly identify the student with the identification (name and photograph) inside the carrying case.
- Parents of students with food allergies are expected to educate their child regarding his or her specific allergies and stress the importance of not sharing food and only eating foods that come from home or are approved by a parent for purchase from the school cafeteria.
- Parents will provide the student with his or her own water bottle and will discourage him/her from using the public water fountain.
- If your child is involved in a non-Ardsley sponsored after school program the parent will speak with the program organizer in regard to your child's specific allergies.

- **Families of Non-allergic students**

- Snack time is designated for 6th and 7th grade students only, due to the early and late lunch periods. All snacks and lunches should be packaged separately so as not to introduce an allergen into the classroom at snack time. All foods are acceptable, unless your child is in an allergy vigilant class for snack time.
- Parents should teach their children about the importance of not sharing food and explain to them how serious food allergies can be for their classmates.

- **All families**

- If your child is in an Allergy Vigilant for Snack Classroom then you will receive a letter explaining which allergens are prohibited in the classroom for any purpose including but not limited to snack, class projects, goodie bags or other items brought from home.

III. District-Level Administrative Responsibilities:

- The district administration will implement and monitor compliance with the policy, regulations and procedures.
- All staff members will be trained before school starts and as needed throughout the school year. This includes teacher aides, teaching assistants, recess aides, and regular/leave replacement substitutes.
- Training includes recognizing the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction, actions that need to be taken, and the proper use of an epinephrine auto-injector.
- During the first days of school, the bus drivers and monitors of students that carry their epinephrine injector on the bus will be trained as well.
- Throughout the year, new staff members and substitute staff will receive training.
- At Open House in Allergy Vigilant Classrooms, the teacher will discuss the allergy/allergies restrictions with all parents.

IV. Schools Responsibility:

- **General:**
 - “Signs and Symptoms” of an Allergic Reaction Poster will be visible in the cafeteria and other instructional areas throughout the school.
 - The school’s nurse will meet individually with teachers who have students with identified food allergies so they understand and are able to respond to an emergency in accordance with the student’s FAAP.
 - Each school, with the School Physician’s orders, will make available extra epinephrine auto-injectors in at least two locations throughout the building for emergency access.
- **In Classrooms / Instructional Areas**
 - **Snack Time for grades 6 and 7**
 - All food snacks are acceptable if your child is in a non-allergy classroom.
 - If your child is in an Allergy Vigilant for Snack classroom then a letter will be sent home explaining which allergens are prohibited in the classroom. The letter must be adhered to by all students and staff in the class. This letter will be resent midway through the school year (January/February) as a reminder to families.
 - If a student inadvertently brings a restricted food into the classroom, the restricted food will be removed. Both sets of parents will be notified of the action taken.

- The child that brought in the allergen will wash his or her hands with soap and water. The teacher will ensure that the area where the allergen was present is cleaned with a wipe.
 - If the allergic child has come in direct contact with the allergen, the allergic child will be escorted to the nurse's office to monitor if there are any signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction.
 - The teacher will notify an administrator that action has been taken and a nurse will contact a parent(s) by phone.
 - **Celebrations**
 - There will be no food at any celebration in any classroom. Note - there are alternatives to celebrate special occasions without food.
 - **Curriculum**
 - On the rare occasion that food is used in a particular lesson, teachers will notify the parents directly and will consider individual allergens and adhere to specific limitations of the student(s) with allergies. If necessary, the student will be provided with an alternative activity.
- **Emergency Procedures (During the School Day and at After School Activities Sponsored by the School District)**
 - If an adult observes signs or symptoms of an allergic reaction the nurse will be contacted immediately. If the nurse is not available, emergency services (911) will be called immediately, on-site administration will be alerted and parents will be promptly contacted (after 911 is called).
 - The child will be immediately assessed for signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction. The student's allergy action plan will be followed.
 - If epinephrine is administered, emergency services (911) will be called, with notification to the parents.
 - A Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT) call will be initiated.
 - The child will be transported to the Emergency Room with a staff member if the parent is not present.
- **School Field Trips**
 - A nurse will typically go on trips whenever possible, especially if food is served, and will carry the necessary medications to treat a possible anaphylaxis reaction. If a nurse is not available, a trained staff member will carry the student's epinephrine auto-injector, the FAAP and will be trained in the use of an epinephrine auto-injector for life threatening emergencies.

- For non-food trips the nurse may not attend and in that case an allergy packet will be sent with a staff member that contains the student's FAAP and their epinephrine auto-injector.
 - Whenever practical the nurse will travel on the same bus as the student(s) with allergies.
 - As per doctor's orders and attestation to self-administer, the student will carry his/her medication on the field trip bus.
- **In the Cafeteria**
 - The school nurse will share the names of the children with food allergies with all lunch teachers at the start of the school year.
 - Parents will be given the option to have their child sit at a designated food allergy table, use a placemat at their lunch table or to sit at any table during lunch.
 - Students who eat lunch at a regular table and prefer to sit with their friends must know to read ingredient labels and not share food.
 - If the parent of the child with food allergies has not requested that their child sit at an allergy vigilant table, the parent may provide their child with a paper placemat. The paper placemat serves as a visual representation that a child has a food allergy and helps to reduce the risk of exposure to a particular food allergen.
 - Parents of students with food allergies can request that their child sit at an allergy vigilant table which can be made available.
 - Parents can speak directly to the food service director (914) 295-5557 or email llowe@ardsleyschools.org to communicate their child's specific allergies and to determine what food/meals/packaged snacks are safe for their child to purchase.
 - The lunch tables are washed down by cafeteria staff before and after each lunch period.
 - Children are instructed not to share food.

V. Student Responsibility:

A student:

- Should not trade or share food with others.
- Should not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
- Should be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.

- Should notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic or if they feel as though they are having an allergic reaction.

VI. Useful Links and Health Forms:

- [Food Allergy Action Plan](#)
- [Your Food Allergy Field Guide - Food Allergy and Research \(FARE\)](#)

VII. Definitions:

- Allergen - Anything that causes an allergic reaction.
- Allergy Vigilant for Snack Classroom - This term is primarily used at CRS & AMS. Some classrooms are extra vigilant with access of allergens in the classroom. Children with allergies are purposefully placed in these classrooms. Teachers are informed of allergens that are not allowed in the classroom during the school year. A letter is sent home to ALL of the parents in allergy vigilant classrooms before school starts and midway through the school year, explaining which allergens are not allowed to be brought into the room at snack time.
- Anaphylaxis - A serious allergic reaction that comes on quickly and may cause death. Early use of an epinephrine auto-injector is the primary treatment for anaphylaxis.
- Cross-contamination/cross-contact - This occurs when one food comes in contact with another food and their proteins mix.
- Epinephrine auto-injector (Also, referred to as an epi-pen or auvi-q) - It is a self-injectable medicine and is the first-line treatment for a severe or life-threatening allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).
- Food allergy - When the immune system mistakes a food protein as a threat and creates an antibody to that food protein. When the food is eaten again, the immune system releases histamine and other chemicals that cause an allergic reaction.
- May contain - Statements such as “may contain traces of” and “made in a facility with” indicates that these food products may contain allergens and should not be considered safe.
- Nut-free - This implies that a food product contains no peanuts or tree nuts. The term “contains no nuts” is used interchangeably with “nut free”. This does not guarantee that the food product is made in a facility/plant or on equipment that is nut free. Note: Coconut is a tree nut, however a person can be allergic to coconut and not have a tree nut allergy. Similarly, someone with a tree nut allergy can tolerate coconut unless that is specified as an allergy for them. (ie. If a classroom

is tree nut free, it doesn't need to be coconut free unless a child has a diagnosed coconut allergy.)

- Nut-free facility - This implies a food product is produced in a facility/plant that is free of peanuts and tree-nuts and therefore there is no risk of cross-contamination.

Note: If a parent or guardian wishes to raise any questions or concerns regarding the contents and/or application of the Allergy Protocols, they should contact the building nurse.