

LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGY (LTA) MANAGEMENT PLAN

I. Purpose and Goal

The Mansfield Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life-threatening allergies, or prevent any harm to students in emergencies. The goal of these administrative procedures is to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to those students, to educate the community, and to plan, maintain, and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs.

The goal of the Mansfield 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

II. Background

Allergic reactions can span a wide range of severity of symptoms. The most severe and potentially life-threatening is anaphylaxis. This Plan is to be used for students who are at risk for anaphylaxis and in the circumstances where a previously undiagnosed life-threatening allergic response occurs.

Anaphylaxis is a collection of symptoms that can affect multiple systems within the body, the most dangerous of which are breathing difficulties and drop in blood pressure. Severe allergic reactions can occur within minutes of ingestion, contact or inhalation or the reaction can be delayed for up to two or more hours.

The most common causes of anaphylaxis in children are:

- food allergies (most commonly; peanuts, tree nuts, milk, dairy products, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish)
- insect stings (yellow jackets, bees, wasps, hornets)
- medication
- contact with latex

III. Medication

The most common medication prescribed for anaphylaxis is Epinephrine. There are a few brand names for this medication but the Mansfield Public Schools strongly recommend the EpiPen and EpiPen Jr. auto injectors. Parents of students with a life-threatening allergy are encouraged to leave an EpiPen at school for use in case of an emergency. It is also recommended that students carry another EpiPen in their backpacks if they participate in before- or after-school activities.

The Mansfield Public Schools have stock epinephrine in each school. This will be used in emergencies for students with unknown allergies who develop an anaphylactic reaction and for

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students with known allergies as a “back up”. There is a medication order, issued by the school physician, in place for the emergency administration of epinephrine.

IV. Latex

Due to the increase in numbers of students with latex allergies, latex balloons will **not** be allowed in the Mansfield Public Schools. All Health Offices will make every effort to provide latex-free medical equipment. Food Services staff will use latex-free gloves.

V. Responsibilities

The sections below highlight the major responsibilities of the various groups, but each child’s plan will be individualized and therefore not all responsibilities can be spelled out in this protocol. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all groups of people within the system.

Expectations of the Parent/Guardian of a Student with a Life-threatening Allergy

1. Teach your child to:
 - Recognize the first symptom of an allergic/anaphylactic reaction.
 - Speak with a teacher or nurse as soon as your child feels a reaction is starting.
 - Encourage self–advocacy.
 - Carry his/her own epinephrine injector when appropriate.
 - Not to share snacks, lunches, drinks or utensils.
 - Understand the importance of hand washing before and after eating.
 - Report teasing and/or bullying that may relate to your child’s allergy.
 - Encourage education on label reading and ingredient safety.
 - Develop awareness of their environment, including allergy-controlled zones and to practice age appropriate behavior regarding health and safety.
 - Inform the school nurse of your child’s allergies as soon as possible after diagnosis and at the beginning of every school year.
2. Work with the school team collaboratively to develop an Individualized Plan of Care for in the classroom, in the cafeteria, in after-care programs and during school-sponsored activities, and provide an **Allergy Action Plan**.
3. Notify the Transportation Department at MPS if your child will require any special provisions during transport to and from school. There is NO eating or drinking on the bus unless medically required.
4. The plan should promote increasing age-appropriate independence as the student grows and matures.
5. Complete and submit all required medication forms.
6. Provide the school with current emergency contact numbers and medical information.
7. Provide the school nurse with up-to-date emergency medication. Medications will comply with the district policy of being in the original pharmacy packaging with appropriate labeling information.
8. Parents should consider providing a medical alert bracelet for their child.

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9. Encourage your child to wash hands before and after handling food.
10. Inform the school nurse of any changes in your child's life-threatening allergy status.
11. Provide the school nurse with a physician's statement if your child no longer has a life-threatening allergy.

Expectations of the Student with a Life-threatening Allergy:

1. Develop a relationship with the school nurse and another trusted adult to assist in identifying issues related to the management of your life-threatening allergy while in school.
2. Know your symptoms that indicate you may be having a reaction.
3. Speak with a teacher or nurse as soon as you suspect symptoms are starting.
4. Stay with an adult until cleared by the school nurse. Do not travel to the nurse without an adult with you.
5. Refrain from sharing food, drinks and utensils. Understand the importance of hand washing before and after eating, and often during the day.
6. Know how to use your EpiPen. Carry one at all times if your parent and school nurse feel it is important.
7. Be aware of your environment as it relates to your allergy. Learn to read food labels.
8. Speak up and question food ingredients in restaurants, school, friend's homes or other new situations.
9. Report teasing and bullying by other students as it relates to your allergy.

Responsibilities of the School Principal

To the extent possible, the Principal of each school will:

1. Follow all applicable federal laws, including ADA, Section 504, and FERPA, as well as all state laws and district policies and procedures that may apply.
2. In conjunction with nurses, 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. Maintain that the protocol that explains Life-threatening Allergies and the application of the protocol at the school, concerning Life-threatening Allergies will be discussed at Kindergarten orientation.
4. Provide walkie-talkies, or other means of communication, to staff supervising students with food allergies outside the classroom setting if no other means of communication is readily available or the location is not in the proximity to the administrative/nurse's offices.
5. Post the school's emergency protocol on LTAs in appropriate locations.
6. Notify staff the locations of Epi-pens in the school.
7. A contingency plan will be in place using designated building staff and understood by all staff and students in the event the nurse is not in the office or in the building. Staff will call 911 in all instances of epinephrine administration.

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Responsibilities of the School Nurse

The school nurse is the primary coordinator of each student's plan. Each school nurse will:

1. Meet with parent/guardian(s) and the student, if appropriate, and develop an Individualized Plan of Care and an Allergy Action Plan.
 - Allergy Emergency Care Plan (AECPP) Guidelines:
 - Identify the student with a severe allergy.
 - Obtain and post photo of student with their AECPP (elementary level).
 - Obtain a medical statement supporting the allergy and the typical allergic reaction from the student's physician. This information may be included in the student's physical examination report or medication form.
 - Notify all staff members who have contact with the student of a severe allergy. Include information regarding the type of reaction to contact, ingestion or inhalation of allergens.
 - Complete, in conjunction with the parent/guardian, the Allergy Emergency Care Plan.
 - Discuss plans in case of an emergency during before and after school programs.
 - Obtain emergency medication (EpiPen/Benadryl) from parent.
 - Keep the AECPP in an accessible place near the EpiPens, which should be kept in an **unlocked, clearly marked location** in the Nurse's Office.
 - Inform students and staff of the location where EpiPens are stored.
 - Consult with the parent/guardian regarding emergency plans during a field trip.
 - Participate in IEP and/or 504 meetings if scheduled.
2. Work with the parents / guardian to obtain:
 - Documentation of allergy
 - Physician order for medication
 - Parent consent to administer medication
 - Medication for Nurse's Office
3. Ascertain that all prescribed medication is up-to-date and readily accessible to staff.
4. Establish and maintain effective lines of communication with the parent while formulating plans and to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.
5. Encourage the parent to call the Food Service Director if they are interested in having their child purchase food at school.
6. Provide information about students with life-threatening allergies to staff where there is a need to know basis.
7. Encourage the parents to contact the MPS transportation department if special provisions are needed during transport to and from school.
8. Provide yearly in-service training and education to the school staff regarding life-threatening allergies, symptoms, risk reduction procedures, and emergency procedures

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including demonstration on how to use an EpiPen. The school nurse will retain documentation of those personnel who have received training on a yearly basis.

9. Familiarize teachers/substitutes with the Individual Health Care Plan of their students and any other staff member who has contact with the student on a need to-know basis.
10. Follow the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations that permit registration of non-licensed personnel to be trained and to administer epinephrine in an emergency.
11. Educate parents on appropriate locations for storing more than one epi-pen at school if their student is involved in before or after school activities.
12. Notify the school principal immediately if a student experiences an allergic reaction and activate EMS (911) every time epinephrine is administered.
13. As appropriate, notify the 504 coordinator and participate in 504 planning.
14. Document the life-threatening allergy in the HEALTHMASTER nursing documentation system and in ASPEN X2.

Responsibilities of Teachers

Each teacher will:

1. Know the signs and symptoms of severe allergic reaction as provided in the student's health care plan, and be aware of and implement the emergency plan if a reaction is suspected.
2. Review the Individual Health Care Plan with the school nurse of any student in your classroom with a life-threatening allergy and include any relevant staff members. Leave information in an organized, prominent, and accessible format for substitute teacher.
3. Participate in in-service training about students with life-threatening allergies including demonstration on how to use an EpiPen.
4. Notify parents by written communication of any school related activity that requires the use of food in advance of the project or activity.
5. Reinforce appropriate classroom hygiene practices/hand washing before and after eating.
6. Respond immediately to reports of students being teased or bullied about their allergy.
7. Follow the Allergy Emergency Action Plan and call 911 when a life-threatening allergy related symptoms appear.
8. Consider students with life-threatening allergies when planning any changes from the classroom routine such as a field trip.

Responsibilities of Food Services

1. Provide in-service training to nutritional service employees regarding safe food handling practices to avoid cross contamination with potential food allergens.
2. Food service employees will wear non-latex gloves. Gloves will be changed during extended use, and hands will be washed frequently to avoid cross contamination with potential food allergens.
3. Maintain knowledge of which food products contain allergens.

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4. With parental approval, set up reasonable procedures regarding food-allergic students, including entering student's allergy information into a computerized data base. Information will remain confidential and shared on a need-to-know basis in compliance with federal privacy regulations.
5. Respond appropriately to all complaints/concerns from a parent or any student with a life-threatening allergy.

Responsibilities Of Persons In Charge Of Conducting After School Activities

The Allergy Action Plan/Individual Health Care Plan will be available for parents to copy to give to others who assume responsibility for their child, such as before- or after-school activity instructors, coaches, CHAMPS counselors, etc.

Responsibilities during Recess and Physical Education Classes

1. Children will be under the supervision of an adult at all times. An EpiPen will accompany a student outside if indicated in the Allergy Action Plan. The EpiPen can be carried by a designated adult or the student if appropriate.
2. There must be some mechanism for communication in case of an emergency such as a walkie-talkie or cell phone.

Responsibilities on Field Trips

1. The student's teacher will consult with the school nurse during the initial planning stages of the field trip per field trip request form and provide the nurse with a list of students participating in the field trip. This list will be reviewed and plans developed to keep all students safe while away from school.
2. The school nurse will review plans for the field trip. Ascertain that adequate accommodations are in place for the planned field trip.
3. An in-serviced trained classroom teacher or if needed, a school nurse will accompany the class on the field trip and maintain and follow the student's Allergy Action Plan.
4. The student's teacher and the school nurse will consider eating arrangements on field trips and plan for prevention of exposure to allergens.
5. The school nurse will ensure that a first aid kit, emergency medications, instructions and a cell phone are taken.
6. Staff will call EMS (911) in all instances of epinephrine administration. Parent/guardian will be notified as well.

Responsibilities of the Bus Company

1. The Bus Company will inform all school bus/van drivers of students with life-threatening allergies, provided that the parent has shared the information with the Bus Company.
2. There will be functioning emergency communication devices (e.g., cell phones, two-way radios, etc.) on each bus/van.

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3. There will be first aid kits on all buses/vans. Only latex-free gloves will be used.
4. The policy of no eating or drinking on routine school bus or van routes will be strictly enforced, except for students with a medically-specified situation (e.g. diabetes).
5. Bus/van drivers are not to distribute any food items to students.
6. Bus/van drivers will be provided an overview annually in prevention efforts, information about common allergens, recognition of signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and emergency procedures to follow in case of a severe allergic reaction.

VI. Emergency Response Procedures

1. Annual training to staff that work directly with students with life-threatening food allergies when the school nurse is not present will occur (e.g. during field trips), will be provided (see School Nurse Responsibilities, #1 and Field Trip Responsibilities, #3).
2. An overview will be provided annually to all staff that will focus on prevention efforts and emergency procedures (see School Nurse Responsibilities, #8).
3. When allergic symptoms are suspected in a student with known life-threatening allergies, the teacher or staff member supervising the student shall follow the Emergency Health Care Plan. The school nurse shall be contacted as soon as possible. Parents/guardians will be informed whenever allergic symptoms are suspected in a student with diagnosed life-threatening allergies.
4. Staff members supervising students with life-threatening allergies must have a means of communication to call for assistance.
5. 911 will be called for any student receiving emergency epinephrine.
6. The student's parent/guardian(s) will be notified by the school nurse or designee as soon as possible in the event of anaphylactic reaction and as appropriate in the event of other allergy symptoms.
7. The school nurse or another school staff member trained to administer epinephrine in accordance with 105 CMR 210 must be available in each school facility during the school day. Staff will be informed by the school nurse of procedures to follow in the absence of the school nurse.
8. The school nurse will maintain an authorization signed by the school physician to administer an EpiPen to individuals with unknown allergies. In the event that an individual with unknown allergies exhibits symptoms of anaphylaxis, staff will contact the nurse and/or call 911 if nurse is unavailable.

VII. Life-Threatening Allergy Management – Key Points

You are never alone. It takes a team to ensure the best for our students. School nurses, teachers, parents, students, school administration, and physicians all need to work together in order to keep students safe at school.

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Educate, educate, educate. This is an ongoing process that changes with the students' needs and as the staff changes. Food bans do not work because it creates a false sense of security. Today, processed foods contain trace amounts of food items that are not always identified on the food label. The best plan is to educate our school community about the issues that face students with life-threatening allergies.

Special events / non-routine days. The greatest risk for a life-threatening allergic reaction exists when the normal routine is broken. Examples are classroom parties, field trips, a substitute teacher, and after school events. **Be prepared.** Always have the Allergy Action Plan available and think ahead to prevent possible exposures to an allergen.

Cross contamination. It only takes a trace amount of the food protein to cause an allergic reaction. To prevent exposure to an allergen, hand washing and washing of surfaces (tables, desks, eating utensils, etc.) where an allergen has been used is necessary. Soap and water are the most effective for cleaning surfaces.

Symptoms vary greatly. Know your students. Never hesitate to activate EMS (911).
Be safe – not sorry. Take all complaints from children with known allergies very seriously.

Epinephrine administration. Once epinephrine is administered, the student **MUST** be transported to the closest hospital for evaluation even if the allergic reaction symptoms seem to subside. A mild reaction can evolve into a full blown anaphylactic reaction very quickly or over several hours. A reaction can also appear to subside or even appear to be under control and then turn into a more severe reaction.

BE PREPARED! KNOW YOUR PLAN!

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RESOURCES

The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN). www.foodallergy.org

National Association of School Nurses. <http://www.nasn.org>

Asthma & Allergy Foundation of America. <http://www.aafa.org>

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. (AAAAI).

<http://www.aaaai.org>

Boston Children's Hospital. www.allergyhome.org

The Centers for Disease Control, <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/foodallergies/index.htm>