

‘Allergy-aware’ schools

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life-threatening allergic reaction. Reactions are often rapid, and may occur within seconds of exposure to even the smallest amounts of the allergen. Immediate medical treatment is required when a reaction occurs.

Examples of life-threatening allergens are:

- **peanuts**
- **tree nuts and nut products**
- **shellfish**
- **cow’s milk**
- **eggs**
- **insect venom**

The Surrey School District strives to keep schools safe for all students and staff. Where there is a student with a life-threatening allergy, school staff, students and parents work together to make the school ‘allergy-aware’ and prepare a plan to reduce the risk of student exposure to the allergen.

Factors such as the age of a student, organization and layout of the school, and properties of the allergen are considered in deciding upon the most appropriate action. Ideally, this is achieved without depriving allergic students of normal interactions or placing unreasonable restrictions on the activities of other students and staff in the school. Information about the plan is provided to all staff, students and parents as necessary.

In order to reduce the risk for allergic students, all students and staff are asked to wash their hands before and after eating. Schools may also ask parents to avoid sending specific food/beverage products to school in their child’s lunch or snack if there is an anaphylactic student in their child’s classroom. Alternative ideas for lunches and snacks can be obtained from public health facilities.

The success of an ‘allergy-aware’ school and the safety of our students are dependent upon the support and assistance of all staff, students and parents to limit the risk of exposure. Cooperation and understanding of life-threatening allergies is greatly appreciated.