



5 Things Teachers Should Know About Managing Students with Life-Threatening Food Allergies

1) Always take food allergies seriously.

Food allergy is a potentially life-threatening condition for which there is no cure.

Strict avoidance of the offending allergen is the only way to prevent a reaction.

Food allergy can cause anaphylaxis, a life-threatening allergic reaction that can be fatal if not treated quickly.

Every bite matters!

2) As a teacher, you can help reduce the risk of an allergic reaction.

Use non-food items, or limit the use of allergen-containing foods, in classroom activities, lesson plans, parties and celebrations.

Prohibit students from sharing or trading food.

Incorporate special seating arrangements such as an allergen-safe table or zone.

Require students to wash their hands or use wet wipes when they enter the classroom in the morning and again after eating lunch. Hand sanitizer does NOT remove allergens.

Wipe down surfaces (tabletops, chairs, etc.) with cleaning agents that remove allergens after allergen-containing foods have been used or consumed.

3) Talk with your school nurse about responding to a potential anaphylactic emergency.

All school personnel who come into contact with a food-allergic student throughout the day (substitute teachers, cafeteria staff, bus drivers) should have a copy of the student's Food Allergy Action Plan (FAAP) in their area, and should be trained and educated on how to recognize the signs of a potential reaction, and to administer epinephrine.

Most states, including Texas, have laws that allow a student, with appropriate consent, to carry their prescribed epinephrine at school.

4) Meet with the child's parent(s).

Assure them that you understand the severity of food allergy, you have been trained and educated on how to recognize a potential allergic reaction and how to administer epinephrine, and that you will keep a copy of the child's FAAP in your area.

Assure them that you will report any bullying/teasing due to food allergy to appropriate school personnel.

5) Foster an environment of inclusion and equality among all students.

Incorporate food allergy, along with other chronic health conditions such as asthma and diabetes, into your classroom curriculum.

Help assure that students with food allergy never feel isolated or excluded from classroom activities.

For additional resources, visit www.foodallergy.org