

# MIDDLEBORO PUBLIC SCHOOLS HEALTH SERVICES LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY PROTOCOL

## Objective

This Protocol is designed to protect students, staff, and visitors with Life Threatening Allergies while at school, at all school-related activities, and on the school bus. The key to safety with Life Threatening Allergies is awareness and prevention. Allergic reactions can span a wide range of severity of symptoms. The most severe and potentially life threatening reaction is anaphylaxis. Allergy Aware Classrooms will be designated by the building administrators and be clearly labeled with appropriate signs to identify them. Informational notices will be sent home to parents/guardians of all students in Allergy Aware Classrooms identifying restricted food items and requiring a parent/guardian signature confirming acknowledgment.

An allergy aware classroom is defined as all staff, students, parents/guardians, and visitors to the classroom will be aware of the known allergies in the classroom. To be allergy aware one must understand the basic information about allergies, how to avoid allergens to avoid reactions, the symptoms of a reaction, and what to do when symptoms of a reaction are observed. Notification will be in the form of signs, letters home, staff meetings, class discussion, and volunteer orientation.

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life-threatening medical condition occurring in allergic individuals after exposure to their specific allergens. Anaphylaxis refers to a collection of symptoms affecting multiple systems in the body, the most dangerous of which are breathing difficulties and a drop in blood pressure or shock, which are potentially fatal. The most common causes of anaphylaxis in children include allergies to bees, latex, and food including dairy products, eggs, fish/shellfish, milk, peanuts/tree nuts, soy, and wheat. Anaphylaxis can occur immediately or up to two hours after exposure, therefore it is important to identify student(s) at risk, have appropriate preventative measures, and be prepared to respond to an emergency.

## Planning

**Prior to entry** into Middleborough Public Schools all student health records must be reviewed by the school nurse to:

- Ensure compliance with Massachusetts State Law for school entry
- Identify any life-threatening allergies or health concerns and document on the Student Health Record and the SIS Medic Alert listing.

## Individualized Health Care Plan

**Prior to entry**, the parent/guardian must arrange a meeting with the school nurse to develop an emergency care plan for management of their child's allergy. The following must be provided to the school nurse **before** the child's first day of school:

- Physician documentation of allergy.
- Physician order for emergency medications is required. All medication orders must be renewed annually.
- Parent/guardian signed consent to administer all emergency medications.
- Completed Individualized Health Care Plan/Allergy Action Plan with parent approval and signature.
- EpiPens, Benadryl, and inhalers with a current date.
- All students with life-threatening allergies will be encouraged to wear an appropriate medical identification bracelet.

## Prevention Strategies

Protecting a student from exposure to offending allergens is the most important way to prevent life-threatening anaphylaxis. The following measures will take place in each area to prevent exposure and respond to emergencies:

### **District/Administrator:**

- Create a system-wide emergency plan for addressing life-threatening food based allergic reactions.
- Provide in-service training and education for staff regarding Life-Threatening Allergies, symptoms, risk reduction procedures, and emergency procedures including EpiPen training.
- Emergency Medical Response Teams will be created and updated annually in September.
  - a. Building Emergency Response Teams will meet once in September to review Emergency Medical Response protocol.
  - b. Building Emergency Response Team members may include the Principal, Assistant Principal, School Nurse, guidance staff, counseling staff, custodial staff, and any other staff members designated by the building principal.
  - c. Emergency Medical Response drills will be conducted in coordination with school evacuation and fire drill in September and periodically throughout the school year.
- Food in the classroom will be restricted and enforced according to the Middleborough Public Schools Wellness Policy.

### **School Nurse:**

- The school nurse will initiate an Individualized Health Care Plan based on information provided by the student's physician/allergist, parent/guardian, and the nurse's assessment.
- Parents and staff will assess needs and develop an action plan for the following situations: travel to and from school, the school day, before and after school programs, and field trips.
- The IHCP will be signed by the school nurse and the parent/guardian.
- The Individualized Health Care Plan will be shared with appropriate school personnel as approved by parent/guardian. This plan will include a photo of the student (if possible), the student's name, the specific allergy, warning signs of reactions, emergency management, and medications. This will be signed by the school nurse and the parent/guardian. Emergency contact numbers must be provided.
- The school nurse will complete a Medication Care Plan in accordance with 105CMR 210.000, The Administration of Prescription Medications within Public and Private Schools.
- The school nurse will identify the student's allergy on the Massachusetts Student Health Record and on the SIS Medical Alert listing.
- The school nurse will assess the student for his/her ability to self-administer epinephrine. The student's individual capabilities and the safety of the student body will be determinants.
- The school nurse will determine if it is appropriate for the student to carry his/her EpiPen after consultation with the parent, physician, and student.
- The school nurse shall encourage the use of Medic Alert bracelets and other methods of identification for students with Life-Threatening Allergies.
- The school nurse will provide lunchroom/recess monitors a list of students with Life Threatening Allergies annually.

### **Classroom/Teacher:**

- All Teachers/staff will complete Allergy Awareness Education and be encouraged to participate in EpiPen Training.
- Teachers will be familiar with the IHCP of students in their classroom and the emergency protocol in the Medical Emergency Response Plan. Student Emergency Action Plans will be included in Substitute Folders.
- In the event of an allergic reaction (**with no known allergic history**), the school nurse will be called immediately and the school's Emergency Medical Response Plan will be initiated. The school nurse will assess the student and determine if Emergency Medical Services (911) should be called.
- In the event of an allergic reaction (**with known allergic history**), the student's IHCP will be followed. The Emergency Medical Response Plan will be initiated. If applicable, the student's EpiPen may be administered by a trained staff member and Emergency Medical Services (911) will be called requesting an Advanced Life Support Ambulance.

- The classroom will be able to communicate with the school nurse by intercom, telephone, walkie-talkie or cell phone.
- Information will be kept about students' allergies in the classroom in a confidential manner. In the case of a food allergy, the identified foods will not be used for projects, arts, crafts, science experiments, cooking, or other purposes.
- Sharing and trading of food will be prohibited.
- Restricted foods will be discouraged in the classroom.
- Teachers will check each day to be sure all EpiPens are in designated locations if applicable.
- All adults and children will be taught to wash hands before and after food handling and consumption.
- If an animal is present in the classroom, care will be taken to identify the ingredients in their food as some animal feeds contain peanuts.
- If a classroom is used for meals, students in Allergy Aware Classrooms will follow the Classroom snack procedure identified below.
- Other life-threatening allergen- free tables will be provided as needed.

**Classroom Snack Procedure:**

1. Parents/Guardians of students in Allergy Aware Classrooms will receive a letter stating the prohibited food items for the classroom. A parent/guardian signature will be required to confirm acknowledgement of this request.
2. Teachers will check all snacks to be consumed during snack time prior to opening to determine safety if they have a student in their classroom with a food allergy. If a student has a snack that may contain a potential allergen and does not have an alternative, he/she may be asked to eat the snack in another classroom or at an alternative location to avoid a potential reaction (students will wash hands with soap and water prior to returning to community tables/supplies and the table will be wiped down with Lysol or Clorox wipes to remove any remaining allergens). Reminder letters may be sent home to parents/guardians as needed and teachers are encouraged to educate their students regarding food allergies.
3. Classroom celebrations will be in compliance with the Middleborough Public Schools Wellness Policy, in addition to the Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools regulations (105 CMR 225.000).

**Substitute Staff Members:**

- All substitute staff will complete Allergy Awareness Education and be encouraged to participate in EpiPen training when completing their hiring packet at Central Office.
- Substitutes will review the sub folder and Individual Health Care Plans, if applicable, for all students in their classroom prior to the start of school.

- Substitutes will contact the school nurse with any questions/concerns regarding the medical needs of the students in the class if necessary.

### **Field Trips:**

- For students with life-threatening food allergies, the school nurse will coordinate safety measures.
- Parents/Guardians of students at risk for anaphylaxis will be encouraged to accompany their children on school trips when appropriate and in compliance with school policy for volunteers.
- **Adequate notice will be given to the school nurse and parents/guardians of students with life threatening allergies for all planned field trips. Middleborough Public Schools Field Trip Protocol will be followed.**
- When field trips are planned, the name and phone number of the nearest hospital will be identified and be part of the teacher's emergency plan.
- Emergency medications and a copy of the student's medication orders and Individual Health Care Plan will accompany the student.
- A cell phone or other communication device will be available on the trip for emergency calls.
- In the absence of parents/guardians or the school nurse, a trained staff member will accompany the field trip and be identified to the student.
- Field trips will be planned to be inclusive.
- Reminder notices will be sent home to parents/guardians regarding food safety and bag lunches.
- Students and staff will be reminded to wash hands after eating and encouraged to bring hand wipes along.

### **School Bus:**

- School bus drivers, in accordance with company policy, will complete Allergy Awareness Education and be encouraged to participate in EpiPen training.
- Eating on school busses is prohibited at all times.
- School bus drivers, in accordance with company policy, will radio the dispatch center in the event of an emergency and activate the 911 system.
- School busses will have a means of communication for emergency calls.
- Parents/guardians are responsible to inform the bus company if their child has a medical concern on an annual basis.
- The school nurse will send home a reminder notice annually encouraging parents/guardians to inform the bus company if their child has a life threatening allergy or any reported medical condition that is of concern. The parent/guardian is responsible to inform the bus company about any medication the student is carrying (i.e.: EpiPen, inhaler, insulin).

### **Gym /Recess:**

- Teachers and staff responsible for gym/recess will complete Allergy Awareness Education and be encouraged to participate in EpiPen training.
- Staff in the gym, on the playground, or other sites used for recess will have a walkie-talkie or cell phone for emergency communication.
- A current EpiPen will be available and a trained staff member will be onsite.

### **After School Activities:**

- All staff will know how to access emergency services-911.
- All District funded school activities will implement Middleborough Public Schools procedures regarding life-threatening allergies and follow their schools Medical Emergency Response Plan in the event of a medical emergency.
- With written parental/guardian permission, coaches or other adult staff will be provided with student Individual Health Care Plans when a life-threatening allergy exists.
- A current EpiPen will be available, and a trained staff member onsite.
- If bake sales are held on school grounds, foods must be tightly wrapped or sealed in accordance with Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public School regulations (105 CMR 225.000). Tables will be washed after use with approved cleaning solution.

### **Food Service Director:**

- Will establish training for all school food service staff to include: accurate reading of food labels, recognizing food allergens, cross contamination, and sanitation programs.
- Will make available to the school nurse/nurse leader nutritional information on all food prepared and served at Middleboro Public Schools **prior to being served with a complete list provided by October 30<sup>th</sup> of each school year.** Will update as needed throughout the year and inform nursing staff of any changes, additions, etc.
- Will maintain food labels from each food served to a child with allergies for at least 24 hours after service in the case a reaction occurs from a food consumed in the cafeteria.
- Will maintain contact information with vendors to access food content information.
- Will have knowledge of the laws protecting students with food allergies as they relate to food services.
- In schools where there are students with peanut allergies, a peanut free table will be available in the cafeteria and clearly identified as such.
- After each meal service, peanut free tables and all chairs will be thoroughly washed with an approved solution.
- Students will be encouraged to wash hands before and after eating.

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

This procedure will be followed in the case of a life threatening allergic reaction identified by the school nurse and/or trained staff members:

- Activate the Emergency Medical Response Team.
- Initiate the IHCP/Emergency Action Plan, if applicable. Administer the EpiPen if symptoms of anaphylaxis present. (See “When to use an EpiPen”)
- Call 911, requesting Advanced Life Support Ambulance.
- Remain with the student; try to reassure him/her.
- Notify parent/guardian.
- Delegate staff to provide privacy and manage crowd control.
- Delegate staff to direct Emergency Medical Responders to the student’s location.
- A designated staff member will accompany the student to the hospital.

## **POST REACTION RESPONSE**

### **Mild Reaction:**

- School nurse will contact parent.
- School nurse will meet with student and parent to re-examine the Individualized Health Care Plan.

### **Moderate to Severe Reaction:**

- School nurse will obtain as much accurate information as possible about the allergic reaction.
- School nurse will identify those involved in the medical intervention and all witnesses.
- Factual information that does not identify the student may be provided to the school community to reassure students and staff that the crisis is resolved.
- If the allergic reaction is thought to be from a food provided by the school food service, assistance will be sought from the School Food Service Director to determine what potential food was served or consumed.
- Review the student’s Individualized Health Care Plan/Allergy Action Plan.
- Amend the IHCP to address any changes that need to be made.
- Review with everyone involved any changes that need to be made to prevent another reaction.

- Provide reassurance to student, parents/guardians, staff members, and other students that necessary changes have been implemented to prevent another reaction.
- School psychologists and/or school counselors will be available for students, staff, etc. who may experience anxiety and provide services as needed.

**Fatal Reaction:**

- In the rare, but possible instance that a fatal allergic reaction occurs, the school's crisis plan for dealing with the death of a student will be implemented.

**Addendums:**

- Individual Health Care Plan
- Standing Orders from Middleboro Pediatrics for EpiPen/Benadryl
- EpiPen Delegation Approval- Massachusetts DPH
- Letter to parents/guardians re: peanut allergies
- 105CMR 210.000, The Administration of Prescription Medications within Public and Private Schools
- Middleboro Pediatrics Handout on Anaphylaxis
- "When to use an EpiPen" Orientation Handout