

**Life-Threatening Conditions and Allergy Management**



**Adopted: June 28, 2011**

**Amended: August 11, 2020**

**External References**

- Education Act: Sections 85, 87, 175, 188, 190
- Canadian School Boards Association Anaphylaxis Handbook
- SSBA Policy Advisory: Managing Life-Threatening Conditions: Guidelines for Saskatchewan School Divisions

**Internal References**

- AP 317 – Appendix A – Anaphylaxis Awareness and Education Guide
- Form 316-2 Provision of Medication
- Form 316-3 Provision of Prescription Medication Physician
- Form 317-1 Medical Alert Information
- Form 317-2 Student Specific Emergency Plan
- Form 317-3a-g Allergy Management (Anaphylaxis) Letter/Newsletter Templates
- Form 317-8 Letter to Parents of Students with Life-Threatening Allergies (Sample Template)

**Background**

The Division recognizes that students may have medical conditions that could potentially become life threatening while they are attending school and school activities. A potentially life-threatening illness is defined as any chronic illness, medical condition or allergy, such as diabetes, severe allergies, epilepsy, and asthma, that in certain conditions, when left untreated or improperly treated, could lead to death. The division believes in respecting the confidentiality and dignity of students with potentially life-threatening medical conditions.

Children with life-threatening conditions need to feel safe in order to learn and grow emotionally in a safe school environment. The Division is committed to undertaking procedures for the management of students with life-threatening conditions while they are the responsibility of the school, recognizing that this responsibility is shared among the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), the school system and health care providers.

**Definitions**

Anaphylaxis is a sudden and severe allergic reaction, which can be fatal, requiring immediate medical emergency measures to be taken. The allergy may be to food (nuts, shellfish, etc.), insect sting, medication, exercise, latex, or other.

Asthma is a chronic, inflammatory disease of the airways in the lungs.

Diabetes is a chronic disease, in which the body either cannot produce insulin or cannot properly use the insulin it produces.

Epilepsy is a neurological condition which affects the nervous system. Epilepsy is also known as a seizure disorder.

**Procedures**

1. Responsibilities of the Principal:
  - 1.1. Work as closely as possible with the parent(s)/guardian(s) of students with life-threatening conditions.

- 1.1.1. Ensure Form 316-2 Provision of Medication, Form 316-3 Provision of Prescription Medication Physician and Form 317-2 Student Specific Emergency Plan are completed.
- 1.1.2. Meet with parents and the classroom teacher to review the student's life-threatening condition. For life-threatening allergies - provide parent(s)/guardian(s) with Form 317-8 Letter to Parents of Students with Life-Threatening Allergies.
- 1.1.3. Establish an emergency protocol.
- 1.1.4. Review responsibilities of all groups – parent(s)/guardian(s), classroom teacher, bus driver and student.
- 1.1.5. Ensure collection and proper storage of prescription and non-prescription medication that have been provided by the parents.

1.2. With the consent of the parent:

- 1.2.1. Post Form 317-2 Student Specific Emergency Plan in a central, but not public place in the school. Ensure all staff are aware of this location.
- 1.2.2. Ensure all staff have received information on the life-threatening condition and that those with responsibility for the child receive training and are aware of the Student Specific Emergency Plan (including administration of medication (i.e. auto-injector, insulin, etc.).
- 1.2.3. Ensure all staff and stakeholder individuals (i.e. parents of other students on the bus) have reviewed this administrative procedure and understand their respective responsibilities.
- 1.2.4. Maintain up-to-date emergency contacts and phone numbers.
- 1.2.5. Schools shall ensure that the school community is aware and educated regarding students with life-threatening allergies, including signage on entrances to reduce the risk of peanut/nut products brought into schools.
- 1.2.6. Maintain a permanent reminder as part of the school newsletter to ensure a safe environment for all students, including not sending foods with peanuts/nuts or other allergens to school.

2. Responsibilities of the Classroom Teacher:

- 2.1. To review the Student Specific Emergency Plan to ensure awareness of the symptoms and actions necessary for the life-threatening condition
- 2.2. Ensure Form 317-2 Student Specific Emergency Plan is in the day-book, and taped to the teacher's desk, in consultation with the parent.
- 2.3. Discuss life-threatening conditions with the class, in age-appropriate terms (see lesson plans and resources available at [www.safe4kids.ca](http://www.safe4kids.ca)).
- 2.4. Leave information in an organized, prominent, and accessible format for substitute teachers, parent volunteers, or others who may have occasional contact.
- 2.5. For life-threatening allergies:
  - 2.5.1. Send parent information about appropriate lunch/snack items.
  - 2.5.2. Encourage students not to share lunches or trade snacks.
  - 2.5.3. Choose nut/peanut-free, allergen-free foods for classroom events.
  - 2.5.4. Any time food is requested from home reinforce the message to ensure products

with peanuts/nuts, or other allergens are not sent to school.

2.5.5. Establish procedures to ensure that the anaphylactic child eats only what s/he brings from home.

2.5.6. Establish procedures to follow if students bring unsafe foods i.e. provide a separate eating area and send a note home to the family.

2.5.7. Reinforce hand washing before and after eating.

2.6. Plan appropriately for field trips:

2.6.1. Ensure that emergency response plans are considered.

2.6.2. Ensure that emergency medication (i.e. auto-injector, insulin) is taken when leaving the classroom/school.

3. Responsibilities of the Bus Driver:

3.1. Meet with the Principal or designate to review and attend in-service training regarding Form 317-2 Student Specific Emergency Plan. (including training in the use of an auto-injector for life-threatening allergies)

3.2. Place a copy of the Form 317-2 Student Specific Emergency Plan with the bus log and remember to take the form if the driver changes buses.

3.3. Carry out emergency action plan as necessary.

3.4. Be aware of the location (i.e. student backpack) of emergency medication (auto-injector, etc.). If an auto-injector is stored on the school bus it cannot be subject to extreme heat or freezing.

3.5. Minimize the risk to students by not providing or allowing nut/peanut products on the bus.

4. Responsibilities of school staff who coordinate food served, offered or sold in schools:

This includes: nutrition program, servery, sporting or special events, parent meetings, lunch room supervisors, etc.)

4.1. Keep the food safe for everyone.

4.1.1. Do not provide or allow any peanut/nut, products in planned food activities at school.

4.1.2. Never assume a food is free from nuts or peanuts.

4.1.3. Read the ingredient list of any products used in the program each time you purchase, including ready-to-eat foods that are brought into the school for special events.

4.1.4. Avoid any products that do not carry a complete list of ingredients (i.e. bulk foods).

4.1.5. Always wash hands before preparing and handling food.

4.1.6. Practice safe food handling procedures, thoroughly clean and disinfect work/cooking surfaces, utensils, and equipment to ensure that cross contamination cannot occur.

4.1.7. Attend in-service training in the use of an auto-injector.

5. Responsibilities of the student with a life-threatening condition and the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s):

5.1. Arrange a meeting with the classroom teacher and principal, prior to the start of

school. The principal may invite other staff to participate.

- 5.2. Ensure that all staff are aware of the Student Specific Emergency Plan and the Provision of Medication for emergency purposes.
  - 5.3. Provide a Medic Alert® bracelet for their child.
  - 5.4. Submit completed medical forms, including Form 316-2 Provision of Medication, Form 316-3 Provision of Prescription Medication Physician and Form 317-2 Student Specific Emergency Plan. (updated annually and as required)
  - 5.5. Ensure that the child has immediate access to medication (i.e. an up-to-date auto-injector) at all times.
  - 5.6. Teach their child:
    - 5.6.1. To recognize the first symptoms of the life-threatening condition.
    - 5.6.2. To keep medication accessible.
    - 5.6.3. To communicate clearly to a staff member when s/he is experiencing symptoms of a life-threatening condition.
    - 5.6.4. To take as much responsibility as possible for his/her own safety.
  - 5.7. For severe allergies,
    - 5.7.1. Teach their child:
      - 5.7.1.1. Not to share food or drinks
      - 5.7.1.2. To ensure proper hand washing
      - 5.7.1.3. To understand that the school is not allergen-free and there is always risk present.
6. Responsibilities of all parent(s)/guardian(s) when students with life-threatening allergies are attending school:
- 6.1. Work cooperatively with the school to eliminate allergens from packed lunches and snacks.
  - 6.2. Avoid sending food with peanuts/nuts or other allergens to school.
  - 6.3. Participate in parent information sessions.
  - 6.4. Inform the teacher prior to distribution of food products to any children in the school.
7. Designated School Nut Room
- 7.1. Schools may have a designated room that students can go to eat their nut products, in the event parent(s)/guardian(s) send food containing nuts or other allergens to school.
  - 7.2. The room may be one that is not used as a regular classroom.
  - 7.3. It is preferable that the room have a sink for hand washing and cleansing wipes to wipe all surfaces – desk tops, door knob, etc. at the end of the lunch period. If no sink is available, hand washing immediately after eating is required.
  - 7.4. Parents sending products containing peanuts/nuts or other allergens will be reminded of the expectation that we work cooperatively to reduce the risk for all students.

## Administrative Procedures 317 - Appendix A

### Anaphylaxis Awareness and Education Guide



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**External References**

- Education Act: Sections 85, 87, 109, 175, 188, 190

**Internal References**

The main goal of allergy management is to "reduce the risk" for students and staff with life-threatening allergies (anaphylaxis) by taking the initiative and making a commitment to become aware and educate everyone regarding prevention and intervention practices. While we cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment, we will ensure that steps are taken to minimize the risk of exposure.

**Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis can include:**

- Skin:** swelling of eyes, face, lips, tongue, itching, warmth, redness, rash, hives
- Breathing:** wheezing, shortness of breath, throat tightness, cough, hoarse voice, trouble swallowing, runny itchy watery eyes/nose
- Stomach:** nausea, pain, cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
- Heart:** pale, blue color, dizziness, lightheaded, faint, weak pulse, headache

**Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis include:**

- B** – Breathing is difficult, throat or chest is tight, hoarse
- I** – Itchy lips, hives, swelling
- N** – Nausea, vomiting
- D** – Dizzy, unsteady, confused

Most serious reactions occur rapidly and respond quickly to epinephrine. Epinephrine may be given with an auto-injector (i.e. EpiPen). Some life-threatening reactions may have a delayed onset and recur several hours after seemingly effective treatment. This is why it is imperative that people go to hospital and remain there for observation.

The most common allergens include food (peanut, tree nuts, fish and seafood in adults, and milk, eggs, peanut, soy, tree nuts, fish and seafood in children), medication (penicillin), insect venom, latex and exercise.

Children with anaphylaxis live with stress that is foreign to most children. These children need to feel safe in order to learn and grow emotionally. All children deserve a safe school environment.