

SNEEZE GAZETTE™



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Managing Food Allergies in Schools

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Safety at School

** Your child's allergist plays a key role in providing guidance to you, your child's teachers, school nurse, and administrator, by developing an individualized plan to provide safety in school for children with food allergies and anaphylaxis.*

Whether you've safely navigated your child through the waters of food allergy for years, or you're a brand-new sailor on the scene, it may be of interest to know that food allergy in school-age children has increased so that it now affects one in 25 students. Food allergy is one of the most common causes of life threatening allergic reactions or anaphylaxis (anaphylactic shock) in school. Of the 3.9 million kids in the United States with food allergy, 16-18% of them have had a reaction in school. About one quarter those reactions occurred before the child or family was even aware of the food allergy. As such, without a plan, this can pose a major challenge in the school setting.

Getting essential information to school personnel so that they recognize and know how to treat a food allergy reaction is a basic part of a good management plan. Your child's allergist plays a key role in providing guidance to families, school personnel, administrators, and education policymakers to develop the plans to provide safety in the school setting for children with food allergies and anaphylaxis.

Your child's allergist will explain the signs and symp-

toms of allergic reaction to you and your family and will provide a written, easy to follow management plan that explains epinephrine use and what to do in an emergency. You can share this essential management plan with your child's school. At most schools, the school nurse is the person who coordinates getting the information in the plan to your child's teachers, administration, and lunch staff. Get to know her!

Periodically your child's allergist will review the management plan and update it as your child's needs change. It is comforting to know that in recent years, many school districts have worked hard to develop



Your Allergist can create a management plan you can share with your child's school

policies that employ food allergen free zones, provide epinephrine training for staff, and transport to emergency care.

Regular follow up with your child's allergy specialist is the most important step you can take to ensure ongoing education and management of your child's food allergy.

By Christopher Randolph, MD
and Lisa Wall

