



Anaphylaxis Policy

May 2025

Overview

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction. It is at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum. The whole body is affected, often within minutes of exposure to the allergen, but sometimes it can be hours later. Causes often include foods, insect stings or drugs.

Definition: *Anaphylaxis is a severe life threatening generalised or systemic hypersensitivity reaction*

This is characterised by rapidly developing life-threatening airway/breathing/circulatory problems.

Common UK Allergens include, but are not limited to:

- Peanuts
- Tree Nuts
- Sesame
- Milk
- Egg
- Fish (including shellfish)
- Latex
- Insect venom
- Pollen
- Animal Dander
- Penicillin (antibiotic)

This policy aims to set out how Crestwood Community School will support students with allergies, to ensure they are safe and are not disadvantaged in any way whilst taking part in school life.

Roles & Responsibilities

Parent Responsibilities:

- Ensure the school has been informed of the child's allergy, including any history of severe allergic reactions and details of any prescribed medication
- Ensure all required medication is supplied, in date and replaced as necessary.
- Keep the school up to date with any changes in allergy management.
- Liaise with our School Matron to write a Health Care Plan for your child.

Staff Responsibilities:

- Staff to be aware of all students with known allergies – remember anaphylaxis could happen at any time, not just at mealtimes
- Any food related activities must be supervised with due caution.
- Staff leading school trips will ensure they carry all necessary emergency medication and supplies. They will check that any students with a medical condition, including allergies, have their medication with them. Students without their medication on the day of the trip will not be able to attend.
- School Matron, first aider in charge, will ensure that the up to date Health Care Plan is kept with the students medication
- First aiders will check that medication is in date on an annual basis and send a reminder to parents if medication is approaching expiry or has expired
- School Matron will keep a register of all students with allergies and will record any incidents and emergency treatment given.

Students Responsibilities:

- Students must carry their own auto-injector with them at all times
- Most students should be able to administer their auto-injector themselves
- Students with allergies must act responsibly and have a good awareness of their symptoms
- Students should notify staff as soon as they think they are beginning to have symptoms of an allergic reaction.

Health Care Plans

A health care plan is written for all students with a life threatening illness. These plans provide us with information about the student's illness, their medication and instructions on what to do in the event of an emergency.

Emergency Treatment and Management of Anaphylaxis

What to look for in the event of an allergic reaction

- Swelling of the mouth or throat
- Difficulty swallowing or speaking
- Difficulty breathing
- Sudden collapse/unconsciousness
- Rash or hives anywhere on the body
- Abdominal pain, nausea, vomiting

- Sudden feeling of weakness
- Strong feelings of impending doom

Anaphylaxis is likely if all of the following 3 things happen -

- SUDDEN ONSET (a reaction can start within minutes) and RAPID PROGRESSION OF SYMPTOMS
- LIFE THREATENING AIRWAY AND/OR BREATHING DIFFICULTIES AND OR CIRCULATION PROBLEMS (alteration in heart rate, sudden drop in blood pressure, feeling of weakness)
- CHANGES TO THE SKIN : Flushing, Urticaria (an itchy, red, swollen skin eruption showing markings like nettle rash or hives), angioedema (swelling or puffing of the deeper layers of skin and/or soft tissues – often lips, mouth face etc.

Anaphylaxis can develop very rapidly, so a treatment is needed that works rapidly.

Adrenaline is the mainstay of treatment and starts to work within seconds. Adrenaline should be administered by an injection into the muscle (intramuscular).

Adrenaline will:

- Open the airways
- Stop swelling
- Raise blood pressure.

It must be administered with the minimum of delay as it is more effective in preventing an allergic reaction from progressing to anaphylaxis than in reversing it once the symptoms have become severe.

Action

- Stay with the child and call for help. **DO NOT MOVE THE CHILD OR LEAVE THEM UNATTENDED**
- Remove trigger if possible (e.g. insect stinger)
- Lie the child flat (with or without legs elevated) – A sitting position might make breathing easier
- **USE ADRENALINE WITHOUT DELAY** and note time it was given. Inject at upper outer thigh- through clothing if necessary
- CALL 999 and state **ANAPHYLAXIS**
- If no improvement after 5 minutes administer second adrenaline auto injector
- If the child becomes unresponsive and is not breathing commence CPR immediately
- Phone parent/carer as soon as possible

In every case the student **MUST** go to hospital for observation.

Supply, Storage and Care of Medication

Secondary aged students are encouraged to take responsibility for and to carry their own adrenaline auto injectors at all times. These should be kept in a suitable bag or container.

Parents should supply the school with at least one spare auto injector which will be kept in the medical room easily accessible at all times.

This medication should be stored in a rigid box, clearly labeled with the student's name. The medication box should include:

- Adrenaline auto injector
- Antihistamine tablets or syrup (if prescribed)
- Asthma inhaler (if prescribed)
- Up to date health care plan

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that the kit is up to date and clearly labeled, however our School Matron/First Aider will check the medication on an annual basis and send a reminder to parents/carers if medication is approaching expiry date.

It is possible for parents/carers to subscribe to an expiry alert to make sure they get replacements in good time.

Disposal of injectors: Give to paramedics at time of use.

Staff Training

First aid trained staff are on site. Training can be provided on an ad hoc basis as required.

Inclusion & Safeguarding

Crestwood Community School is committed to ensuring all children with medical conditions, including allergies, in terms of both physical and mental health, are properly supported in school so they can play a full and active role in school life, remain healthy and achieve their academic potential.

Catering

All food businesses (including school caterers) must follow the Food Information Regulations 2014 which states that allergen information relating to the “Top 14” allergens must be available for all food products.

The school menu is available for all parents to view on our website

The catering staff will be informed of all students with any food allergy and will have a copy of their health care plan (including photo).

Parents are welcome to contact our Catering managers directly by telephoning the school, to discuss their child’s dietary needs.

We adhere to the following Department of Health guidance -

- If food is purchased from our canteen, students should check with the catering staff that the food is safe for them if they are unsure
- Students should be encouraged to read and check the labels for any allergens

In October 2021, Natasha’s Law came into force, Crestwood Community School has fully backed this and all of our pre-packed sandwiches are now marked with relevant allergy information.

Allergy Awareness

We adopt a whole school awareness of allergies, rather than attempting to enforce a ban on any particular food group (i.e. nuts). This is a much better approach as it raises awareness not just to our staff, but to all students as well.

In this way we will have an environment where everyone is aware of what Allergies are, and how to treat a severe allergic reaction.