

# ANAPHYLAXIS

## Purpose of the Pamphlet:

To raise community awareness of anaphylaxis and to provide information to our school community.

## What Is Anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a life threatening allergic reaction. It can be triggered by accidentally inhaling, injecting or absorbing an allergen. Some sources include:

\* Foods                    \* Medications            \* Insect stings            \* Exercise                \* Latex

Most food reactions are caused by peanuts, nuts, shell fish, fish, milk, eggs, soy, sesame seeds and wheat sulfites.

## How Do I Know When An Allergic Reaction Is Happening?

It is sudden, violent and frightening. It may begin with itching of the eyes and face. Other symptoms like vomiting, diarrhea and difficulty breathing may develop. If the reaction is not stopped, it may lead to a drop in blood pressure, loss of consciousness and even death. Death can occur within minutes from airway obstruction.

## What Is The Response To The Allergic Reaction?

If a person knows that they have a life-threatening allergy, they carry an Epi-Pen. An Epi-Pen is an epinephrine dosing unit which when administered, can stabilize the allergic reaction and possibly save a life while being transported to the hospital. However, one dose of the Epi-Pen lasts for only 10 - 15 minutes, and a second or third dose may be required.

## What Is Epinephrine?

Epinephrine is a hormone referred to as adrenaline. It is produced by all of us in the adrenal glands.

## What Does Epinephrine Do?

Epinephrine:

- prevents or reverses swelling that may occur in the skin or in the airway.
- is a bronchiodilator which reverses a muscle spasm which occurs in the airway.
- prevents or reverses the fall in blood pressure that may occur in anaphylaxis. It improves the pumping ability of the heart and prevents leakage of fluid from blood vessels.

## How Can We Help Avoid Anaphylactic Reactions?

Peanut allergies are becoming more and more common in our society. At Gracefield Public School, there are a few children who have this potentially life-threatening allergy. Here are some facts about living with peanut allergies.

## Facts About Living With Peanut Allergies:

- ✓ only a tiny amount is required to set off a reaction
- ✓ some may react to smell alone
- ✓ peanuts are in many snack foods
- ✓ peanut butter sticks to everything
- ✓ first exposure can be fatal
- ✓ There are approximately 50 Canadians that die per year
- ✓ More than 50,000 Canadians suffer
- ✓ 2 percent are adults, 7 percent are children
- ✓ The incidence is rising at a rate of 25 percent each decade
- ✓ It is the deadliest allergic reaction.



For example, they know that taps, door knobs, jam jars or even a clean spoon, etc. from a peanut-eating household could be contaminated. Anaphylactic people avoid the allergen and tell others about their allergy. But, peanut allergic reactions can be found in such odd places. A 12 year old girl had puffy eyes after a basketball game. Why? Several students had been eating peanuts and had traces of the peanuts on their hands. These small traces were transferred to the basketball during the game. People must always be alert.

## How Can We Help Avoid Anaphylactic Reactions?

Awareness: Know and understand the allergic reaction.

Avoid: Avoid the allergen and tell others about the allergy.

Action: Carry an Epi-Pen.

## Why should my child be deprived of peanut products when the problem is another child's?

If your child had the life threatening reaction you would be the first to demand that all peanuts be removed from the environment. Fortunately, many schools and school camps have come to realize the magnitude of the problem.

No guarantee can be made about keeping our school a peanut free zone, however, we have:

- ✓ in-serviced the staff about anaphylaxis and Epi-Pens
- ✓ had the Health Dept. check our process at the school
- ✓ posted pictures of high risk students including information and medication on a central bulletin board in the staff room
- ✓ highlighted anaphylaxis in our school's monthly newsletters
- ✓ collaborated, produced and distributed this pamphlet

We encourage parents to pack peanut-free lunches.

### Peanut-Less Lunches

Peanut butter is often a protein staple used that is quick and easy. You will be happy to know that protein is found by choosing foods from the four food groups of Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. The following foods have approximately the same amount of protein as 2 tablespoons of peanut butter (1 serving of Meat and Alternatives).

- \* 1 oz. meat
- \* 1 cup yogurt
- \* 1 cup milk
- \* 1 slice cheese pizza
- \* 1 oz. cheddar cheese
- \* 1 cup Post Raisin Bran
- \* 1 bagel

The lunch meal should include one food from each of the food groups of the Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating. Mix and match to plan a balanced lunch.

### GRAIN PRODUCTS

- \* Bread - whole wheat, rye, cracked wheat, oatmeal, pumpernickel
- \* English Muffin
- \* Left over pasta
- \* Muffins
- \* Pita Bread
- \* Crackers
- \* Bagels, rolls, buns



### VEGETABLES & FRUIT

- \* Fresh Fruit
- \* Canned fruit in own juices
- \* Vegetable sticks & Dip
- \* Vegetable juice



### MILK PRODUCTS

- \* 2% milk (sold at Gracefield)
- \* 1% milk
- \* Yogurt
- \* Cheese
- \* Milk based custard or pudding
- \* Milk based soup
- \* Cheese slices



### MEAT ALTERNATIVES

- \* Hard boiled egg
- \* Chick peas
- \* Refried beans
- \* Left over chicken wings
- \* Cold meat loaf
- \* Cold cuts
- \* Left over pizza

### SAMPLE OF PEANUT BUTTER- LESS MENU

#### MONDAY

- \* Sliced meat, cheese and lettuce in a pita
- \* Carrot sticks
- \* Orange slices
- \* Milk

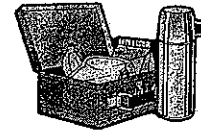


#### TUESDAY

- \* Cold hard boiled eggs
- \* Celery stuffed with soft cheese
- \* Raisin Bran Muffin
- \* Fruit juices

#### WEDNESDAY

- \* Crackers & Cheese
- \* Sliced Cold Cuts
- \* Cucumber slices
- \* Canned Fruit in juices
- \* Milk



#### THURSDAY

- \* Pizza slice
- \* Green Pepper Rings
- \* Yogurt
- \* Fruit juices

#### FRIDAY

- \* Pasta salad
- \* Vegetables & Dip
- \* Fresh Fruit
- \* Milk

### RESOURCES

1. ALLERGY ASTHMA INFORMATION ASSOCIATION  
130 Bridgeland Avenue, Suite 424  
Toronto, ON M6A 1Z4  
Phone: (416) 783-8944 / 1-800-611-7011  
Fax: (416) 783-7538  
Website: [www.cadvision.com/allergy](http://www.cadvision.com/allergy)  
\*\* Information used with their permission \*\*
2. ANTHONY J. HAM PONG, M.B. B.Sc., F.R.C.P. and  
EDGAR H. YEE, M.B. B.Sc., F.R.C.P.  
Consultants in Allergy and Chemical Immunology; Ottawa, ON  
\*\* Information used with their permission \*\*
3. VIDEO: Alexander, The Elephant Who Couldn't Eat Peanuts  
Distributed by Allergy Essentials, 59A Robertson Road, Suite 148,  
Napeon, ON, Canada, K2H 5Y9

### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

\* Our teaching staff, educational assistants, caretakers and secretary who are alert to the needs of our students with anaphylaxis and keep their environment (school and field trips) as safe as possible, every day.