

How to be allergy aware: Information for school students

People with an allergy can become sick when they come into contact with things that are harmless to most people. Examples include:

- Insects that sting (e.g. Bees, wasps)
- Medicines
- Food
- Things that they breathe in (e.g. dust mite, plant pollen, pet dander)

People with allergies to triggers they breathe in can get hay fever and asthma like symptoms like:

- Runny nose, sneezing and itchy eyes
- Cough, tight chest and get out of breath

However, people with allergies to food, medicine or insect stings can get very sick and have problems like:

- Get itchy red skin and lumps
- Face swelling
- Bad coughing and finding it hard to breathe
- Tummy ache and vomiting
- Dizziness/fainting

Most people have heard about peanut allergy, but lots of other foods can cause allergic reactions too. The most common foods people are allergic to are peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, wheat, fish, shellfish, soy and sesame seed.

Sometimes an allergic reaction can make a person so sick, that they need emergency medicine (adrenaline autoinjector) quickly and then they need to go to hospital by ambulance. This is called **anaphylaxis** (ana-fil-axis) and it means “severe allergic reaction”.

So that people with allergies don't get sick, they must:

- Not eat any food they are allergic to.
- Stay away from insects they are allergic to.
- Not take any medicines they are allergic to.

How can you help?

If you know someone with an allergy:

- Don't tease, trick or joke about it.
- Don't try to make them sick by giving them the food they are allergic to.
- Never share your food with them.
- Wash your hands after eating, especially if you ate the food they are allergic to.
- Ask them about what they are allergic to and help them avoid it.
- Get help from an adult if someone with allergy to food or insects feels sick, even if they don't want you to.

What should happen when a student has anaphylaxis at school?

- If a student with allergy feels sick when they are at school, they (or their school mates) should immediately ask for help from a nearby teacher or other adult.
- If no teacher or other adult is nearby, a school mate should run to get one ASAP.
- The student with allergy should stay where they are and lay down (or sit if it is hard to breathe) whilst the teacher or other adult quickly brings the emergency medicine (adrenaline autoinjector) to the student.
- If an older student has their emergency medicine (adrenaline autoinjector) with them, this should be given immediately by the student themselves (if they are able) or by someone else if the student is too sick.
- The ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis should be followed.