

NUT AWARE POLICY

RATIONALE

Our aim is to provide a safe learning environment for all people in our school community. To support this, Liwara Catholic School is a 'Nut Aware' school. This policy aims to increase our community awareness in order to minimise the risk of children with documented allergies to nut products.

Our school has developed and will maintain a whole school action and implementation plan when dealing with students who have critical life threatening allergies.

Anaphylaxis is a severe form of allergic reaction which is potentially life threatening. It can be fatal within minutes; either through swelling that shuts off airways or through a dramatic drop in blood pressure. There are many causative agents for anaphylaxis with nuts often being the precipitative factor.

Anaphylaxis is preventable. Avoidance of specific triggers is by far the best option. Management is by immediate injection of adrenaline and emergency transfer to hospital.

Food allergies affect approximately 1 in 50 children and it is likely that at school, children will encounter and may accidentally ingest one of the many products which causes an allergic reaction. Students with food allergies may react to tactile (touch) exposure or inhalation exposure. Not every ingestion exposure will result in anaphylaxis but the potential always exists. We can never entirely enforce or regulate what comes from home in each child's lunch box. Any food containing nuts or foods cooked in nut oil, or which contain traces of nut oil must not be brought to school. We expect the community to assist in working toward minimizing the risks and looking at alternatives for nut products.

Products that should not be brought to school:

- Nuts
- Peanut butter
- Nut spreads such as Nutella
- Some fruit and nut bars
- Muesli bars containing nuts
- Chocolates and other products that 'may contain nuts' listed in the ingredients

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

School Community Responsibilities:

- Organise regular anaphylaxis training at the beginning of each school year and as needed
- All parents/carers of students in the school are to be notified when there is a student/s with a life threatening food allergy. The foods which cause this allergic reaction will be listed.
- Notification sent home with a list of foods that should not be brought to school
- Reinforce appropriate avoidance and management strategies
- Keep updated **Medical Emergency Action** plans and a photo in the relevant class and first aid room
- Individual classes may need to develop class specific measures
- Ensure that any special lunches organised e.g P&F funded lunches adhere to the Nut Aware Policy
- Provide additional information to classes with children who have had previous anaphylaxis to nuts

- Ensure any donated food items for fun days and 'treats' are labelled with '*this product may contain nuts*'
- New families are informed of this policy when starting at the school, with reminders published regularly in the newsletter, at Parent Information nights and Orientations days
- Keep students Epi-pen in an agreed area and have a staff member responsible for checking the expiry date of the Epi-pen
- A duty teacher will have a 'Duty Bag' containing an Epi-pen and photographic identification of students with special needs.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/Carers of children with diagnosed anaphylaxis:

- Prior to entry into school, or for a student who is already in the school, immediately after the diagnosis of a life threatening allergic condition, the parent/carer should meet with the school to develop an individualised Medical Emergency Plan/Anaphylaxis Plan
- Provide the school office with a Medical Action Plan that has been signed by a medical practitioner with a documented plan for first aid response
- Inform the school immediately and update the documentation if there is a change in the child's medical needs
- Provide an Epi-pen to the school for use with their child. They will need to ensure that the Epi-pen is clearly labelled and not out of date and replace it when it expires or after it has been used. It must be kept in a clearly defined location agreed to by parents and school
- Provide written authorisation for the school to administer the Epi-pen or other medication or to assist a child to administer the medication
- Provide the name and contact details of the doctor who signed the Medical Action Plan
- Support the class teacher/s and other staff in implementing the Health Care Plan
- Teach and encourage children to self-manage
- Update the child's photo as student moves through the school

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff are asked to support the Nut Aware Policy by:

- Having individual student's information with a Medical Emergency Action Plan available and accessible for relief teachers.
- Incorporating nut allergy awareness as part of the class health and hygiene program
- Maintaining Nut Aware supervision at eating times and prevent students from sharing food
- Considering the policy when catering for camps and excursions
- Taking Epi-pens, medications and Medical Emergency Plans on camps, excursions and to sporting events. If the classroom teacher is not attending the event it is their responsibility to relay relevant information and medication to the attending staff member
- Reminding students and parents of the Nut Aware Policy prior to school events where food is available for sharing
- School Epi-pens to be taken with the First Aid Officer to school and interschool sport carnivals.

Attending up to date training provided by the school in:

- ~ What is an allergy?
- ~ What is anaphylaxis?
- ~ What are the triggers for allergy and anaphylaxis?

- ~ How is anaphylaxis recognised?
- ~ How can anaphylaxis be prevented?
- ~ What should be done in the event of a child having a severe allergic reaction?
- ~ Epi-pen use.

PROMOTING THE NUT AWARE POLICY

The policy will be promoted by:

- Parents and carers being informed via the school newsletter
- New families to the school community being informed via the Enrolment Information Package
- Staff being informed and provided with training opportunities
- The following treatment information is displayed on a poster in the First Aid and Staffroom
- outlining the treatment system

1. Remove the EpiPen from the container. Form a fist around the EpiPen® and pull off blue safety release cap. A useful rhyme to help you know how to hold the EpiPen is: "blue for the sky, orange for the thigh".
2. Place orange tip against the outer mid-thigh of the child. The mid outer thigh is the 'fleshiest' or meatiest part of the thigh, where the muscle is. (Note; there is no need to 'swing and jab') A sudden jab may cause the child to jump and the needle to be discharged before the adrenaline is injected. It is important to hold your child securely while administering the EpiPen®. It may be given through light clothing. If the clothing is difficult to remove you should not waste time attempting to do this.
3. Push HARD until a loud click is heard or felt and hold in place for 10 seconds

NOTE: The EpiPen® can only be used once. After it is used it should be given to the ambulance officers to dispose of and should be replaced as soon as possible.

All parents are asked to support the Nut Aware Policy by:

- Being sensitive and supportive to the needs of students with a history of Anaphylaxis
- Providing children with healthy food options that do not contain nuts
- Encouraging children to wash their hands before and after eating
- Adhere to the Nut Aware Policy when sending food to school for shared functions, eg birthday cakes, class parties, shared lunches

IN CONCLUSION

At Liwara we seek to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all members of our school community. Whilst we can never entirely enforce or regulate what comes from home in each child's lunch box nor where foods contain traces of nuts, nut oil, we hope people will assist in working towards minimizing the risks and look at alternatives to nut products. We believe an effective partnership between home and school will ensure the successful inclusion of students with life threatening allergies. We are committed to responsible and achievable management practices in reducing foreseeable risks associated with the support of students with anaphylaxis with the school environment.