

## September Anaphylaxis Letter

### Sample Only

As we begin a new school year we would like to inform you that \_\_\_\_\_ Elementary School is an **allergen aware** school. There are children in attendance who suffer from **severe and life threatening** allergies to certain foods, such as peanut and nut products. Exposure to the smallest quantities can cause severe life threatening reactions. Anaphylaxis is a severe and life threatening allergic reaction. The most common allergen triggers are food, insect stings, medications, exercise and latex. An anaphylactic reaction involves symptoms from two or more body systems.

We at \_\_\_\_\_ School would appreciate the co-operation of the entire school community in **NOT** sending any lunches or snacks that contain peanuts or nuts, which could potentially harm a child. Please make sure that all of your children's caregivers are aware of the food restrictions. Please avoid sending food for birthdays or special occasions. There are many alternatives such as stickers and pencils.

If you have any questions please talk to your child's teacher or the school staff.

We look forward to your co-operation in making this a safe year for all our students.

## Sample School Newsletter Insert

We would like to inform you that there are children in our school, with severe life threatening allergies to (name allergen). This is a medical condition (anaphylaxis) that causes a **severe reaction** to specific foods and can result in death within minutes. As this affects the entire school community, we are requesting that you **not** send foods with you child to school that contain the allergen,

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If you have any questions, please contact your child's teacher or the school staff.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

## Best Practices

When setting up a school to be **allergen aware**, these are some “best practices”:

- identify students with allergen, upon registration/new diagnosis
- send home appropriate forms
- create a questionnaire asking pertinent questions regarding allergy
- have meeting with all parents of anaphylactic children
- in-service all staff about protocol, use of Epi-Pen and your school emergency procedures
- exchange information about school procedures, and what parental expectations are
- put up **allergy alert** signs at all entrances as well as doors of classrooms of the anaphylactic children
- send home letters to the whole school population, notifying parents that specific allergens are discouraged from entering the school
- follow up with a letter or a telephone call to the parents of a child that has brought an allergen into the school. (This should be performed by teacher or principal.)
- if a child brings an allergen in their lunch or snack, you should have that child eat in an area that is not normally used by the general student population. (An office or a conference room has been the general practice for most schools.)
- medication should be stored in a location that is easily accessible and **NEVER LOCKED**.

## School Guide Checklist for Anaphylaxis Protocol

Anaphylaxis is life threatening and can appear suddenly without warning. Working as a team of parents and school staff, anaphylaxis can be a manageable condition. The anaphylactic student needs the support of the entire school community to stay safe and to prevent an anaphylactic reaction.

Here are some suggestions to make the school safer for students with anaphylaxis:

- Annual in-service about anaphylaxis and practice with an Epi-Pen trainer.
- Establish classroom rules: ***No Sharing Food.***
- Discourage allergic foods in the classroom.
- Send a letter to the entire school community that the allergic food not be sent to the school as a snack or lunch.
- Inform the student's parents well in advance of special events involving food.
- Establish a procedure for informing substitute teachers and support staff.
- ***Listen to and believe the student. He or she may be having a reaction before you see it.***
- Reassure the student that you are aware of his/her needs and that you know how to keep him/her safe.
- Train the student to self advocate regarding their allergy. E.g., how to approach an adult.
- Ensure that Epi-Pen is kept with the student or the supervising teacher knows the location of the Epi-Pen.
- Be aware that there are cases of anaphylactic students being threatened with the allergen by bullies. School staff shall deal with such a situation as a serious incident.