
LIFE-THREATENING ALLERGY

Westport Community Schools (WCS) recognizes that students with life-threatening allergies (LTA) require reasonable accommodations necessary to ensure access to available education and education-related benefits. It is the policy of WCS that the management of LTA be accomplished in compliance with applicable state and federal guidelines established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in a document entitled, "Life-Threatening Allergy Policy" and other reliable resources relating to all LTA.

WCS cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with LTA. The goal is to minimize the risk to students with LTA. The guidelines established include building-based plans, training programs for personnel, the implementation of Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP), our medical forms, and any additional accommodations as necessary.

Specific building-based guidelines will be established to ensure that the health needs of all students will be met in the least restrictive environment. In order to assist students with developing the skills necessary to participate in all educational programs, building-based teams will communicate with parents and students to allow the student to gradually assume more responsibility for maintaining their safety as they advance from elementary to secondary school.

Responsibilities

The success of the district in meeting the needs of students with life-threatening allergies requires the diligence and cooperation of all parties, including students and parents. The specific guidelines included in this policy are intended to provide a framework for that cooperation, which is then individualized to the needs of each student. The guidelines for students and parents, while not enforceable, are suggested to ensure the best outcomes for students. Parents and students with concerns are encouraged to communicate with appropriate school personnel.

Responsibilities of the Student:

- Learn to avoid allergens in food and materials.
- Carry life-saving medications, if physically able and developmentally ready. Parent, Student and School Nurse must all agree when the student is developmentally ready to carry all life-saving medications.
- Do not trade or share foods.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear, if physically able.
- Maintain a relationship with the school nurse to assist in identifying issues related to the management of the life-threatening allergy in school.

- Consider wearing medical alert identification.
- Report bullying, teasing and threats to an adult authority.

Responsibilities of the Parents/Guardians:

- Notify the school of your child's allergy immediately after diagnosis and prior to the start of each school year.
- Notify all after-school activities, programs, athletics, etc. of all relevant information regarding your child. **Be aware that the school nurse does not share health information with individuals working with children after school hours. When the nurse is not in the building, the nurse's office is secured and there is no access to information, equipment or supplies.**
~Notify bus driver, if necessary.
- Participate in developing an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP).
- Consider providing photos of your child to all teachers, nurse, food service personnel and any others who may come into contact with your child.
- Ensure your child's knowledge in the self-management of his or her allergy as developmentally appropriate.
- Consider providing medical alert identification for your child.
- Due to serious nature of allergies, it is critical that parents provide the school nurse with all up-to-date life-saving medications and medication orders from the licensed provider within the first week of school.
- When possible, make arrangements to be on field trips or designate a responsible adult.
- Provide the school nurse with the licensed provider's statement if student no longer has allergies.
- Contact the Director of Food and Nutrition Services with regard to menu choices.
- Request student information and photo be posted with Food Service workers if desired.
- Notify the school and the bus company if your child will be carrying an epinephrine auto-injector on the bus.

Responsibilities of the School Administration:

- Include in the school's emergency response plan a written plan outlining emergency procedures for managing life-threatening allergic reactions.
- Provide yearly training and education for all faculty and staff regarding:
 - Food, insect stings, medications, latex.
 - Risk reduction procedures.
 - Emergency procedures.
 - How to administer an epinephrine auto-injector in an emergency.
- As soon as class list is determined prior to beginning of school year: Notify corresponding teachers that their classroom will have a student with an LTA.

- If ICP indicates that the classroom needs special cleaning, ensure that it is completed prior to the start of the school year.
- Ensure that special training for food service personnel occurs.
- Provide emergency communication devices (two-way radio, intercom, walkie-talkie, cell phone) for all school activities, including transportation, that involve a student with life-threatening allergies.
- Ensure that a full-time nurse is available in every school with students with life threatening allergies.
- Inform parents/guardians immediately if a student experiences an allergic reaction for the first time at school.
- Ensure that a contingency plan is in place if there is a substitute teacher, nurse or food service personnel.
- Ensure that all students with LTAs are placed in a classroom where the teacher is trained to administer an epinephrine auto-injector.
- To help promote understanding and cooperation from parents/guardians and students without LTA, use large assemblies such as orientation and open house to discuss the existence of students with LTA and the policy that is in place to handle this.
- Ensure awareness of students with LTAs in planning for all school-wide events.
- Ensure that non-latex products are provided in a classroom where a student with a latex allergy has been assigned.
- Ensure that federal and state regulations (such as HIPPA) are being followed.
- Ensure the enforcement of prohibition against eating on buses by students and drivers.
- Ensure that all teachers receive notification and training (if appropriate) regarding LTAs by Day 15.

Responsibilities of the School Nurse:

- Immediately after the diagnosis of a life-threatening allergic condition, communicate or meet with the student's parents to develop an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) for the student.
- Complete Individual Health Care Plane (IHCP) including the student's name, photo (if permitted), allergens, symptoms of allergic reactions, risk reduction procedures, emergency procedures, and required signatures.
- Familiarize teachers with the Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP) of their students by the opening of school, or as soon as the plans are written. All other staff members who have contact with students with LTAs should be familiar with their IHCPs.
- During annual training and education, instruct staff regarding the Life Threatening Allergy Policy and direct them where to access the policy on-line.
- Conduct a mid-year LTA training and education refresher for teachers wiwth LTA students in their class.
- Inform classroom parents of LTA via letter sent by Health Office / teacher.
- When medications are provided at the beginning of school year, ensure that they will not expire during the year. If they will expire during the school year, ask the parents to make arrangements for them to be current.
- Ensure there is a contingency plan in place in the case of a substitute nurse.

- Provide training to substitute teachers regarding LTAs.
- After an anaphylactic reaction occurs, plan for the student's re-entry into school. Coordinate with teachers, parents and any other necessary school staff.
- Communicate with parents after any allergy concerns occur during the school day.
- Inform Principal of any teacher training not completed by Day 15.

Responsibilities of the Teacher/Specialist:

- Obtain and review with the school nurse, all IHCPs pertaining to students in your classroom with LTAs by Day 15 of school start.
- Ensure that the classroom has a functioning communication device for direct contact with the school nurse.
- Communicate with all parents with regard to the existence of LTA within the classroom.
- Participate in education and training regarding LTAs by Day 15 of school start.
- Keep all necessary documents regarding LTAs accessible.
- Ensure that all student teachers, aides, specialists and substitute teachers are informed of the student's with LTA and necessary safeguards.
- For substitute teachers, provide necessary information identifying students with LTAs.
- Within the first two weeks of school, educate classmates to avoid endangering, isolating, stigmatizing or harassing students with LTA. Be aware of how the student with LTAs is being treated; enforce school rules about bullying and threats.
- Respond immediately to every symptom or sign as a possible allergic reaction.
- When a reaction occurs, student should be accompanied by an adult to the school nurse.
- Participate with the planning for student's re-entry to school after an anaphylactic reaction.
- When a student with a latex allergy has been assigned to the classroom, notify all other students to bring in only non-latex school supplies.
- Whenever possible, unscreened windows and doors will remain closed, especially during the seasons when insects are prevalent.
- If a bee/wasp gets in the classroom, immediately remove the student with this allergy from the room.
- Snacks:
 - Communicate with parents of students with LTAs to determine snack protocol.
 - When a protocol is determined, educate all other parents about the presence and needs of the students with LTAs.
- Classroom Activities:
 - It is suggested that food be limited for rewards.
 - Food for activities or celebrations, must have food approval form completed, and all food items checked/approved by nurse.
 - In advance, advise the parents of students with LTAs of all special classroom events and activities to be sure there are no allergens in the materials used.

- Field Trips:
 - Ensure that all life-saving medications and instructions are taken on field trips.
 - Students with LTAs should be assigned to those who are trained in recognizing symptoms of life-threatening reactions, how to use an epinephrine auto-injector and emergency procedures.
 - Ensure that a functioning communication device is taken on field trips.
 - Review plans for field trips; avoid high risk places. Consider eating situations and bee/wasp season. Plan for prevention of exposure to the student's LTA.
 - Know where the closest medical facilities are located and if 911 is available in that area. Provide the phone numbers for closest police/ fire/ems to all chaperones and the school nurse.
 - Invite parents/guardians of students with LTAs to accompany their child on school trips, in addition to the chaperone. However, the student's safety or attendance must not be conditioned on the parent's presence.
 - Parent or Guardian of LTA student will be allowed to ride school transportation.

Responsibilities of the Director of Food and Nutrition Services:

- Give parents on-line resources to research all ingredients used.
- If requested by parents, attend the team meeting to discuss accommodations for the student with LTA.
- Ensure that the LTA student is in the computer system for purchasing food to alert Food Service staff.
- Post the student's allergy information at request of the parents.
- Read all food labels and recheck routinely for potential food allergens so accurate ingredient information can be communicated with parents.
- Train all food service staff and their substitutes to read product food labels and recognize food allergens.
- Review and follow sound food handling practices and cleaning and sanitation protocol to avoid cross-contamination.
- Food service staff will use only non-latex gloves.
- Provide advance copies of the menu and any subsequent changes to the principal for distribution to parents/guardians.

Responsibilities of the School Bus Company:

- Provide a functioning communication device.
- Enforce policy of no food eating allowed on school buses — for drivers and students.
- LTA training by the bus company.

Responsibilities of Athletic Director:

- Ensure that all coaching staff receives education and training regarding LTAs.
- With parent's consent, coaches will keep a copy of allergy information for all students with LTAs.
- Ensure that a functioning communication device is present at all athletic events where students with LTAs are present.

Responsibilities of Buildings and Grounds Supervisor

- Ensure that all custodial staff will clean all surfaces where food has been present with appropriate cleaning methods and materials.
- Have access to all soap and cleaning solution ingredients.
- Custodial staff will use only non-latex gloves and products.
- Whenever possible, unscreened windows and doors will remain closed, especially during the seasons when insects are prevalent.
- Routinely check for presence of bees and wasps, especially nesting areas, and arrange for their removal.
- Inform custodial staff if a classroom with students with LTA has been rented so that proper cleaning can take place following rental.

The Health Advisory Committee shall be responsible for the routine review of this policy.

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