

ALLERGY & DIETARY NEED

HANDBOOK





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INTRODUCTION

West Fargo Public Schools is committed to the safety of all students. Although the health needs are unique for each child, the intent of this handbook is to establish consistent, systemic practices to be followed within the district.

This handbook is provided as guidance for all students in the district, and with the following goals:

1. Provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students with food allergies
2. Reduce the likelihood of severe, or potentially life-threatening, allergic reactions while at school
3. Ensure a rapid and effective response in the event of a severe or life-threatening allergic reaction
4. Protect the right of food-allergic students to participate in all school activities
5. Provide information to school staff to gain a better understanding of the needs of students with food allergies
6. Provide staff with simple checklists on how to accommodate a food-allergic student and minimize risk

This resource was developed to address the needs of students and others with food allergies, with guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control](#).

Most food allergy reactions occur to one of eight common foods: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, wheat, and soy. However, any food can cause an allergic reaction.

The level and severity of reactions can vary considerably among individuals with food allergies. Therefore, the approach to prevent and treatment is tailored to each student's needs.

ANAPHYLAXIS

Anaphylaxis, sometimes called allergic shock, is a potentially life-threatening medical condition occurring in allergic individuals after an exposure to an allergen. It occurs when the body's immune system reacts to harmless substances as though they are harmful invaders. Some individuals react from simply touching or inhaling the allergen; for others, it may be the consumption of a small amount of the allergen. The severity of the reaction is not predictable.

When the inflammatory symptoms are widespread and systemic, the reaction is termed *anaphylaxis*. Symptoms can occur immediately or up to two hours following exposure. Symptoms include:

- ✓ Shortness of breath with a repetitive cough
- ✓ Pale, blue, or flushed skin
- ✓ Faint or weak pulse, irregular heartbeat, and dizziness
- ✓ Tightness or closing of the throat, trouble swallowing, and changes to voice
- ✓ Swelling of the tongue and/or lips
- ✓ Itchy, running nose; sneezing
- ✓ Rash, widespread redness, and swelling of the skin
- ✓ Abdominal cramping, vomiting, and/or diarrhea
- ✓ Anxiety and/or confusion

Fatalities can occur when epinephrine is withheld or delayed. When in doubt, medical advice states it is best to administer a prescribed epinephrine auto-injection; it can be self-administered or by trained staff. Once the injection is given, 911 is called. The building administrator, or a delegate, is to verbally notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible.

If a student is experiencing an allergic reaction, never leave them alone or send them on their own to the nurse's office.

Following the allergic episode, the school is responsible for documenting the incident and filing it in the student's record.

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DISTRICT BEST PRACTICES

West Fargo Public Schools addresses life-threatening allergic reaction prevention in all classrooms, inclusive of all classroom activities and projects, school buses, and instructional and recreational areas.

The Food Service Department provides elementary schools with menus free of products containing peanuts or tree nuts. Efforts are made to omit from the breakfast and lunch menus any products labeled to indicate it was manufactured in a factory that also processes peanuts and tree nuts.

Peanut products at the middle schools and high schools are limited to pre-packaged peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and peanut butter packets; each has a clear label of its contents.

Due to the complexity and diversity of allergies, it is impossible to entirely omit an allergen from an environment. Rather than restricting an allergen throughout a cafeteria or entire school, schools adopt allergen-aware protocols for classrooms and the cafeteria that includes the following:

- ✓ Permit students to bring lunches from home that may include an allergen of other students
- ✓ Enforce district policies that prohibit the sharing of homemade snacks or treats with the entire class
- ✓ Maintain holidays, birthdays, and other moments of celebration as food-free
- ✓ Accommodate students with known life-threatening allergies by:
 - Establishing and labelling allergen-aware classrooms
 - Establishing and labelling allergen-aware cafeteria tables
 - Enforcing adequate cleaning and disinfection of surfaces
- ✓ Provide school staff with annual anaphylaxis training
- ✓ Utilize district checklists to ensure unity in the management of food allergies

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Establishing Allergen-Aware Locations

Depending on the severity of an individual student's allergy, the health care team and parent/guardian determine the approaches to take for the student's safety.

Allergen-Aware Classroom

When an [allergen-aware classroom](#) has been established, a letter is sent to the parent/guardian of all the classroom's students explaining the allergen is not to be sent to school for snack time. The classroom is labeled as an allergen-aware environment on the exterior side of the classroom door. Additional coordination occurs in the cleaning and disinfection of the classroom surfaces.

Allergen-Aware Cafeteria Table

The table is labeled as an [allergen-aware table](#). The table is available to students known to have a life-threatening allergy and their peers who eat a school provided meal; students bringing a packed lunch from home are not to eat at the table. Building custodians wash and sanitize the allergen-aware table with an exclusive bucket.

Student Safety

When staff are notified of a life-threatening food allergy in a student, they work with the parent/guardian to gather the necessary documents, information, and medication to develop and implement an appropriate safety plan.

Staff Training

Staff participate in annual training, either in-person or through an instructional video, that addresses allergy symptoms, anaphylaxis symptoms, and administration of an epinephrine auto-injection.

Related District Policies

- FCAA-AP: [Accommodating Students with Allergies & Special Dietary Needs](#)
- ACBD-AP: [Medication Administration](#)
 - ACBD-E2: [Prescription or Over the Counter \(OTC\) Authorization for Medication Administration](#)
 - ACBD-E5: [Request & Authorization for Student Self-Administration of Medication](#)
 - ACBD-E14: [Emergency Care Plan for Severe Allergy](#)

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APPENDIX

When choosing a nut-free snack for your child, it is important to always check the ingredient label on the package to ensure it is free of peanuts and tree nuts of all kinds. Check the ingredient label at the time of each purchase as the manufacturer may have changed equipment, processing, or product lines since your last purchase. Do not purchase items with an allergy or ingredient alert such as the following:

- **MAY CONTAIN PEANUTS AND/OR TREE NUTS**
- **PROCESSED ON SHARED EQUIPMENT WITH PEANUTS AND/OR TREE NUTS**
- **MANUFACTURED IN A PLANT THAT PROCESSES PEANUT AND/OR TREE NUTS**
- **CONTAINS PEANUT AND/OR TREE NUT INGREDIENTS**

This list is to serve only as a resource; it is not complete and is subject to manufacturer recalls and mislabeling.

NUT FREE SNACK SUGGESTIONS		
PRODUCT	RECOMMENDED	AVOID
Fruits & Vegetables		
applesauce		
fresh fruit		strawberries
fruit snacks	Betty Crocker, Market Pantry	Kellogg's
Dairy		
string cheese		
yogurt	Dannon's Danimals	
Cereal		
toasted whole grain oats	General Mill's Cheerios	
cinnamon and sugar wholegrain squares	General Mill's Cinnamon Toast Crunch	
Miscellaneous		
crackers	Nabisco's Cheese Nips, Nabisco's Ritz, Nabisco's Saltines (original), Pepperidge Farm's Goldfish (original, colors, cheddar), Nabisco's Handi-Snacks (cheddar)	Ritz Bitz
cookies	Nabisco's Nilla Wafers, Nabisco's Teddy Grahams (cinnamon, chocolate, honey, chocolate chip)	
popcorn	Pop Secret, Act II, Jolly Time	

PARENT/GUARDIAN CHECKLIST

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REGISTRATION

As a new student entering the district, indicate the presence of an allergy on the health forms included in the registration process.

As a current student diagnosed with an allergy, update the child's health forms in Parent Portal and immediately notify the child's school nurse.

When applicable, complete the following:

- ACBD-E2: [Prescription or Over the Counter \(OTC\) Authorization for Medication Administration](#)
- ACBD-E5: [Request & Authorization for Student Self-Administration of Medication](#)
- ACBD-E14: [Emergency Care Plan for Severe Allergy](#)
- FCAA-E1: [Medical Statement for Students with Allergies, Chronic Illness, or Disability Who Requires Special Dietary Accommodations](#)
- Deliver properly labeled inhaler, epinephrine auto-injector(s), and/or an antihistamine to the school nurse; replace after use or expiration

If the student utilizes district transportation, review the busing plans and communicate concerns with Transportation Department.

Discussion with the classroom teacher how you will be notified of upcoming field trips and events that may impact your child.

CHILD SELF-MANAGEMENT

Educate your child in self-management of their food allergy, including:

- ✓ Safe/unsafe foods; how to read food labels
- ✓ Strategies to avoid exposure to known allergies
- ✓ Symptoms of an allergic reaction
- ✓ When and how to tell an adult if a reaction may be, or is, starting

PARENT/GUARDIAN CHECKLIST

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- ✓ Proper handwashing before and after meals
- ✓ Importance of not sharing/trading food with others
- ✓ Location of the epinephrine auto-injector(s) and/or antihistamine at school and at home
- ✓ Self-administration of an epinephrine auto-injector, if age appropriate

CHILD CHECKLIST

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The child with a food allergy should be provided with an age-appropriate education regarding their allergy. It is important for the child to be aware of what accommodations they need. Children are encouraged to advocate for themselves regarding their allergy.

CHILD SELF-MANAGEMENT

The child takes steps to self-manage their food allergy by knowing the following:

- ✓ Safe/unsafe foods; how to read food labels
- ✓ Strategies to avoid exposure to known allergies
- ✓ Symptoms of an allergic reaction
- ✓ When and how to tell an adult if a reaction may be, or is, starting
- ✓ Proper handwashing before and after meals
- ✓ Importance of not sharing/trading food with others
- ✓ Location of the epinephrine auto-injector(s) and/or antihistamine at school and at home
- ✓ Self-administration of an epinephrine auto-injector, if age appropriate

A child can carry an epinephrine auto-injector while at school.

Children are encouraged to report any teasing or bullying regarding food allergies to the classroom teacher.

With assistance from a parent/guardian, the child makes an effort to review the posted lunch menus in advance to make appropriate meal selections.

ADMINISTRATOR CHECKLIST

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Always review student health records that are submitted by a parent/guardian.

ESTABLISHING ALLERGEN-AWARE LOCATIONS

Depending on the severity of an individual student's allergy, the health care team and parent/guardian determine the approaches to take for the student's safety.

Allergen-Aware Classroom

When an [allergen-aware classroom](#) has been established, a letter is sent to the parent/guardian of all the classroom's students explaining the allergen is not to be sent to school for snack time. The classroom is labeled as an allergen-aware environment on the exterior side of the classroom door. Additional coordination occurs in the cleaning and disinfection of the classroom surfaces.

Allergen-Aware Cafeteria Table

The table is labeled as an [allergen-aware table](#). The table is available to students known to have a life-threatening allergy and their peers who eat a school provided meal; students bringing a packed lunch from home are not to eat at the table. Building custodians wash and sanitize the allergen-aware table with an exclusive bucket.

STAFF TRAINING & COMMUNICATIONS

Staff participate in annual training, either in-person or through an instructional video, that addresses allergy symptoms, anaphylaxis symptoms, and administration of an epinephrine auto-injection.

All school staff are made aware of severe allergy plans and receive communications when updates are necessary.

Administrators work with parent groups to eliminate the sale or serving of food at events.

SCHOOL STAFF CHECKLIST

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Always review student health records that are submitted by a parent/guardian.

Staff participate in annual training, either in-person or through an instructional video, that addresses allergy symptoms, anaphylaxis symptoms, and administration of an epinephrine auto-injection.

SCHOOL NURSE

The school nurse serves as the primary point of contact for addressing the needs of students with food allergies and providing training, resources, and guidance to families, students, and staff.

Following the notification of a student having a food allergy, the school nurse ensures the parent/guardian completes the applicable forms:

- [ACBD-E2: Prescription or Over the Counter \(OTC\) Authorization for Medication Administration](#)
- [ACBD-E5: Request & Authorization for Student Self-Administration of Medication](#)
- [ACBD-E14: Emergency Care Plan for Severe Allergy](#)
- [FCAA-E1: Medical Statement for Students with Allergies, Chronic Illness, or Disability Who Requires Special Dietary Accommodations](#)

The school nurse is responsible for sending a copy of the completed [FCAA-E1: Medical Statement for Students with Allergies, Chronic Illness, or Disability Who Requires Special Dietary Accommodations](#) to the Food Service Department.

If needed, the school nurse verifies a properly labeled inhaler, epinephrine auto-injector(s), and/or an antihistamine is provided and stored in the school office.

The school nurse is responsible for providing the parent/guardian a copy of the district's [Allergy & Dietary Need Handbook](#).

SCHOOL STAFF CHECKLIST

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CLASSROOM TEACHER

If a student is identified as having a life-threatening food allergy, the classroom teacher completes the [Allergen Aware Notification Letter](#) and mails a copy to each household.

Teachers avoid using food in lessons, crafts, and as incentives and deny the admittance of homemade items being brought into, and shared with, the class. Students are not allowed to share food within the classroom.

The classroom is labeled as an allergen-aware classroom and proper documentation and details are included in the classroom substitute teacher folder.

The classroom teacher provides students with time to wash their hands before and after eating meals and snacks.

The classroom teacher communicates with the parents/guardians in advance of a field trip or event involving food so that alternative arrangements can be made for allergic students if needed.

FOOD SERVICE DEPARTMENT

The Food Service Department staff receive a copy of [FCAA-E1: Medical Statement for Students with Allergies, Chronic Illness, or Disability Who Requires Special Dietary Accommodations](#) when it is submitted for a student. If requested by the health care team, a department representative meets with the parent/guardian and student to review menu selections.

The West Fargo Public Schools Food Service Department is responsible for planning school menus, posting them online, and noting the eight common food allergens. Records are maintained of food products that contain allergens and all items are properly labeled. Staff abide by procedures for utensil use, food preparation and handling, and handwashing to minimize cross-contamination.

CUSTODIAN

Building custodians wash and sanitize an allergen-aware table with an exclusive bucket to minimize cross-contamination.



November 6, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This letter is to inform you that a student in your child's classroom has a severe allergy to peanuts and/or tree nuts. This would include:

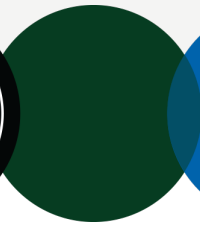
- Almond
- Almond paste
nougat
- Brazil nut
- Cashew
- Chestnut
- Filbert
- Gianduja
- Hazelnut
- Macadamia nut
- Walnut
- Pecan
- Marzipan
- Natural almond
extract
- Nu-Nuts artificial
nuts
- Nut butter
- Nut oil
- Nut paste
- Nutella
- Pine nut
- Pistachio

Strict avoidance of tree nuts and peanut products is the only way to prevent a life-threatening allergic reaction. We request your assistance in providing this student with a safe learning environment.

ALLERGEN-AWARE CLASSROOM

To reduce risk of exposure, the classroom is now an allergen-aware environment. Please do not send any products containing tree nuts or peanuts with your child for snack time. Any exposure to these types of nuts, whether through contact or ingestion, can cause a severe allergic reaction. If your child accidentally brings a snack item containing nuts, we will offer an alternative snack and send a reminder home.

Any snacks brought into the classroom to share with students must be prepackaged and contain a complete ingredient list. The item must be processed in a peanut-free and tree nut-free facility. Additionally, any supplies brought into the classroom for projects and/or activities must abide by these guidelines.



ALLERGEN-AWARE CAFETERIA TABLE

An allergen-aware table is available in the school cafeteria. The table is available to students known to have a life-threatening allergy and their peers who eat a school provided meal; students bringing a packed lunch from home are not to eat at the table. If your child brings lunch from home that contains nut products, they may sit at any non-allergen-aware cafeteria table.

We appreciate your support in these procedures. Please sign and return this form to ensure your family has received and understands the above information. If you have any questions, please contact me.

[Staff Name]

[Staff Title]

[School Name]

[School Street Address] | [School City, State, and Zip]

[email address] | [phone number]

I have read and understand the classroom procedures intended to avoid exposing students to peanuts and tree nuts. I agree to do my part in keeping the classroom safe for all students.

Student's Name

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

ALLERGEN-AWARE CLASSROOM

NO TREE NUTS



Please wash your hands before visiting us.
Thank you for your support in keeping our
classroom safe for all students.

ALLERGEN-AWARE CLASSROOM

NO PEANUTS



Please wash your hands before visiting us.
Thank you for your support in keeping our
classroom safe for all students.

ALLERGEN-AWARE TABLE

NO TREE NUTS



This table is available to students known to have a life-threatening allergy and their peers who eat a school provided meal; students bringing a packed lunch from home are not to eat at this table.

ALLERGEN-AWARE TABLE

NO PEANUTS



This table is available to students known to have a life-threatening allergy and their peers who eat a school provided meal; students bringing a packed lunch from home are not to eat at this table.