

Allergy Awareness Information

Ascension of Our Lord School has a number of students who have severe allergies to peanut products (peanuts, peanut butter, peanut oil etc.). This means that if they come into contact with peanut products they may experience life-threatening reactions (anaphylaxis). Contact can be either through eating, inhaling or touching peanut products as well as through cross contamination. Cross contamination is particularly dangerous since the presence of peanut products is hidden. For a child with a severe peanut allergy, actions such as picking up a piece of wrapping paper from a food item containing peanut products, or eating a sandwich that has been touched with a knife used to spread peanut butter on another sandwich can be deadly. Without immediate medical treatment such a child could die within minutes.

As member of the Ascension of Our Lord School Community **you are encouraged to help us make our school PEANUT AWARE** by lowering the risk of an allergic reaction. Here is how you can be supportive:

1. When preparing lunches or snacks for your child that will be brought to school please consider providing foods which are free of peanuts or peanut products. Though it sounds simple, it may mean no peanut butter sandwiches or peanut butter cookies. It does mean you should read the labels of other foods like muffins, granola bars and cookies before you put them in your child's lunch or snack.
2. If you send in a treat for the class (birthdays, special occasions, etc.) provide a complete list of ingredients for the teacher and take extra precautions to prevent cross contamination.

The school is taking the following steps to deal with this situation:

1. Students with severe allergies and their families take the necessary precautions in order to prevent an allergic reaction. For severe allergies, we require students to have an epi-pen in fanny pack at all times and on the person. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the school is aware of the health hazards and to review this with the school annually as the school year begins.

2. All staff has been made aware of this situation and annual reviews/in-services of the correct medical procedures regarding anaphylaxis are provided.
3. Students with severe allergies will have their pictures taken. These, along with the necessary background information, are posted in a location accessible to staff (not students) in an effort to ensure that all supervisors know who these students are.
4. The Health Nurse will in-service all staff in how to administer an epi-pen.

Prevention of allergic reactions, of course, is the best approach. I hope you will assist us in our efforts to create as safe an environment as possible.

- **If your child has a severe allergy and requires medication please ensure that you have completed the forms for the current school year and that the medication is available at the school. Also it is important that you speak with your child's teacher directly to convey information regarding medical situations and treatments.**

Medically Vulnerable Students

Schools rely on parents to ensure we are current with respect to particular medical needs of students. Health conditions (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, allergies, etc.) should be re-addressed to the school medical information and updated each September. Parents must be aware that medications cannot be administered by school staff unless appropriate paper work and medical authorization is in place. This requires "lead time" on the part of the parent and involvement of a doctor in completing forms. Students with allergies are expected to have an epi-pen on their person at all times. Questions can be addressed to the school office. Parents are asked to be diligent. Thank you for your support.