

Allergy Consultants, P.A.

Specialists in Pediatric and Adult Allergy, Asthma, and Sinus Disease

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PEANUT ALLERGY

Information for schools and parents

Many children are allergic to foods, and peanuts and other nuts are the most common and most serious offenders. This letter is being sent to your school because at least one of the children in your school has already manifested a serious reaction to nuts. We encourage you to share this information with parents.

Is food/peanut allergy common?

Yes. Statistically, it is most likely that there will be at least one child in your school who could become very seriously ill and require emergency treatment if he or she ate peanuts. It is more common than any other life-threatening problem that you might encounter in the school situation!

Suppose there is a reaction in the school setting?

The reaction can be quickly reversed by an injection of adrenaline given with an Epi-pen® (supplied by the parent). There would be no significant harm if this were given and not truly needed, but very serious complications could follow if the caretaker were not to give it. Every adult in the school setting should learn the instructions in its use.

What is the ideal treatment?

Prevention!!! Avoid the triggers. Obviously the parents and children with food allergy know not to have peanuts around. Considerate classmates and their parents will not bring peanut, peanut butter, or foods containing peanuts into the classroom. How would you feel if you were the responsible party to bring a food that triggered a life-threatening situation! Just as a child is not allowed to bring a weapon into the school, potentially lethal foods (to some children) should be avoided. If a **child must (???)** bring peanut foods into the classroom, be sure the foods are adequately labeled.

Shouldn't the child know not to eat peanuts?

Children with food allergies generally know which foods to avoid. Unfortunately, sharing of foods and the inadvertent mixing of foods between children in school is very common. Also, some children can have a life-threatening reaction to just a fraction of a peanut.

If the reaction is so serious, why is the child in school?

The reaction is always avoidable with appropriate care, as outlined above and reversible if a reaction should occur. Also, the Americans with Disabilities Act legally protects the child's place in the classroom.

If any teacher or school would like more information or a discussion of this important subject, or other allergy problems, please call our office.

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