

Standards of care

Allergy and anaphylaxis management in the school setting

Anaphylaxis is a chronic condition affecting 5%-10% of the children in the United States. It can be serious and life-threatening, but it can also be controlled. Symptoms of allergies can be mild, severe, or fatal, regardless of previous reaction.

There are 8 foods that account for 90% of all food-allergic reactions. These are: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, cashews, etc.), fish, shellfish, soy, and wheat. Other common allergens include insect stings and latex.

Allergy and anaphylaxis emergency action plan

Students with a history of anaphylaxis should have an allergy and anaphylaxis action plan on file with the school before they attend. This is signed by the parent and healthcare provider and reviewed by the school nurse. This emergency action plan should be reviewed every year, and if the student transfers to another school.

The Utah Department of Health and Human Services, along with other stakeholders, have developed a form that is required for any student carrying or self-administering epinephrine while at school.

Epinephrine auto-injector

Utah Code [26B-4-407](#) allows students to carry or carry and self-administer an epinephrine auto-injector when the appropriate form has been completed and signed by a parent and healthcare provider and returned to the school.

School nurses should determine their individual scope of practice regarding new allergy treatment therapies and allergy care practices.

Management

The school nurse can assist the student who has allergies with managing their condition in the following ways:

- Encourage parents to leave an epinephrine auto-injector at the school in case of emergencies.
- Assist teachers in modifying the student's environment to reduce triggers.

Self-care ability level should be determined by the school nurse and parent. All students, regardless of age or expertise, should have an emergency action plan, and may need assistance when having an allergic reaction.

Allergen free schools or classrooms

Declaring a classroom free from allergens should be discouraged. It is not always possible to prevent other students from bringing potential allergens to school. Instead, work to become an allergen "aware" classroom or school. Sending notes to other parents in the class or school asking for their support in not sending allergen-containing items is appropriate as long as confidentiality is maintained for the student with the allergen.