Guidelines for the Care of Students with Food Allergies At-Risk for Anaphylaxis Summary

* A food allergy is an abnormal response to a food, triggered by the body’s immune system (NIAID, 2010). It is a potentially serious immune-mediated response that develops after ingesting or coming into contact with specific foods or additives.
* Symptoms of a food induces allergic reaction may range from mild to severe and may become life-threatening. A life-threatening allergic reaction to food usually takes place within a few minutes to several hours after exposure.
* Anaphylaxis is a “serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death” (Simmons, 2008). Anaphylaxis is highly unpredictable and includes wide range of symptoms.
* Key Elements:
  + Identification of student with food allergies at-risk for Anaphylaxis
  + Development, communication, implementation and monitoring of Food Allergy Action Plans, Emergency Care Plans, Individualized Health Care Plans, and/or 504 plans
  + Reducing risk exposure within the school setting
  + Training for school staff on recognition of Anaphylaxis and the appropriate emergency response
  + Post Anaphylaxis reaction and review of policy and procedures
* Alerts:
  + Mouth: Tingling, itching, swelling of the tongue, lips or mouth; blue/grey color of the lips
  + Throat: Tightening of throat, tickling feeling in back of throat; hoarseness or change in voice
  + Nose/Eyes/Ears: Runny, itchy nose; redness and/or swelling of eyes; throbbing in ears
  + Lung: Shortness of breath; repetitive shallow cough; wheezing
  + Stomach: Nausea; vomiting; diarrhea; abdominal cramps
  + Skin: itchy rash; hives; swelling of face or extremities; facial flushing
  + Heart: Thin weak pulse; rapid pulse; palpitations; fainting; blueness of lips; face or nail beds; paleness
* Treatment of Anaphylaxis: Epinephrine is used in the treatment of Anaphylaxis and is usually prescribed as an auto-injector. Prompt use of epinephrine is important to surviving a life-threatening reaction.
* Policies and procedures were implemented at LSSA that address the following:
  + Identification of students with food allergies
  + Development, implementation, communication and monitoring of Emergency Care Plans
  + Reducing the risk of exposure within the school setting
  + Training for school staff on Anaphylaxis and emergency response to anaphylactic reactions
  + Post Anaphylaxis reaction review of policies and procedures
* Identification of Students with Food Allergy-at-risk- for Anaphylaxis: It is important for parents/referring agencies to provide the following information:
  + Identify the student’s allergens
  + Specify the nature of the student’s reactions
  + How to reduce the risk of exposure
  + Provide emergency treatment
  + Facilitate communication between school and healthcare provider
* The medical department will provide a signed statement by licensed physician to the school nutrition program that outlines the following:
  + Students disability
  + Explanation of why the disability restricts the student’s diet
  + Major life activity affected by the disability
  + Food or foods to be omitted from the student’s diet and the food that must be submitted
* Development, Implementation, Communication and Monitoring of Emergency Care Plans. The following will be outlined to help facilitate communication between parents/guardians, referring agencies, facility and on-site medication:
  + Name, date of birth and grade level of the student
  + A picture of the student
  + A list of foods to which the student is allergic
  + Description of past allergic reactions, including triggers, warning signs and students emotional reaction
  + Clear instructions of what symptoms require the use of epinephrine immediately
  + Clear instructions on how epinephrine should be administered
  + The name of medications to be utilized in an emergency including the brand name, generic name and the dosage to be administered and when to give an additional dose.
  + A signature and date line for medical representative or school administrator
  + Contact notification list
* Reducing the Risk of Exposure through Environmental Controls:
  + Policies and procedures in place for the strict avoidance of the food allergen, early recognition of symptoms and prompt treatment
  + Environmental controls include the following:
    - Identifying high-risk areas
    - Limiting, reducing and/or eliminating food from classroom(s)
    - Notifying and educating school and facility staff of the need to limit foods
    - Develop procedures for the management of classroom snacks
    - Implement appropriate cleaning protocols in the classroom
    - Provide training to culinary department to reduce the risk of cross-contamination
    - Provide training on food allergy awareness
    - Post visual reminders to help promote food allergy awareness
    - Educate the students about not trading and/or sharing food, snacks, drinks or utensils
    - Implement hand washing protocols before and after meals
    - Assure staff trained in the administration of epinephrine are available during meals
    - Ready access to epinephrine is available on campus
    - Consider risk reduction strategies for all activities
    - Reinforce rules and expectations about bullying students with food allergies
* Training for School Staff on Food Allergies Anaphylaxis and Emergency Response
  + Training should include the following:
    - Identifying students at-risk for anaphylaxis
    - Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis
    - Implementing Emergency Action Plans, including training in the administration and storage of epinephrine
    - Development and implementation of Individual Health Plans/504 plans
    - Communication procedures for initiating emergency protocols
    - Environmental control measures, to reduce the risk of exposure to a food allergen, including safe food handling, handwashing, and cleaning procedures
    - Working with on-site medical department and local EMS
    - Post anaphylaxis debriefing and monitoring of food allergy management plans
* Post Anaphylaxis Reaction Review of Policy and Procedures.
  + Policies, procedures and regulations will be reviewed and updated annually based on current science and food allergy management.