



Discussion Guide

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Ideas on Risk Minimisation Strategies in the School and/or Childcare Environment

All staff members should know who the child/student at risk of anaphylaxis is by sight. They are not to be left alone when complaining of feeling unwell, even in sickbay.

Their complaint should always be taken seriously.

The many areas of risk and the strategies one might implement to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction vary greatly according to a number of factors including:

- ▲ the age of the child at risk
- ▲ the age of their peers
- ▲ what the child is allergic to
- ▲ the severity of the child's allergy
- ▲ the environment they are in
- ▲ the level of training carers have received.

The following list of strategies is meant to be used as a guide or as a tool to prompt thought on achievable risk minimisation procedures in an environment where there is an individual who is at risk of a potentially life threatening allergic reaction. It is not an exhaustive list of all strategies that could be implemented in any given environment. School and Children's Services staff are encouraged to work with the parents of the child at risk in the production of an individualised School/Children's Services management plan which could include some of the strategies listed in this discussion paper as well as others specific to the child's needs.

** Information on strategies to help prevent insect sting reactions is included at the end of this long list of strategies. In young children, the risk of anaphylaxis from insect sting reactions is much lower than the risk from food allergic reactions but it certainly does still occur.*

Whilst every child at risk of anaphylaxis in Victorian Schools and Children's Services must have an ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis provided by their doctor, each child at risk must also have an Individual Management Plan which details strategies to help reduce risk for that child. This Individual Management Plan is developed on enrolment after the School/Children's Service has a face to face meeting with parents. Once the plan is agreed to by the parents and School/Children's Service, the plan is signed off by both parties. The Individual Management Plan for each child is to be reviewed yearly OR after a reaction, in case management strategies are to be changed. As the child gets older and has more understanding of personal management, strategies do differ. A child may also outgrow an allergy or develop another allergy.



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RISK	Considerations when you have a child at risk of anaphylaxis in your care
Food brought to school	- Consider sending out an information sheet to the parent community on severe allergy and the risk of anaphylaxis. - Alert parents to strategies that the school has in place and the need for their child to not share food and to wash hands after eating.
School fundraising/ special events/cultural days	Consider children with food allergy when planning any fundraisers, cultural days or stalls for fair/fete days, breakfast mornings etc. Notices may need to be sent to parent community discouraging specific food products. E.g. nuts
Food rewards	- Food rewards should be discouraged and non-food rewards encouraged. - Children at risk of food anaphylaxis should eat food that is supplied by their parents or food that is agreed to by parents prior to a given event. If required a clearly labelled 'treat box' could be supplied by parents and located in child's classroom.
Class parties / Birthday celebrations	- Discuss these activities with parents of allergic child well in advance - Suggest that a notice is sent home to all parents prior to the event, discouraging specific food products - Teacher may ask the parent to attend the party as a 'parent helper' - Child at risk of anaphylaxis should not share food brought in by other students. Ideally they should bring own food. - Child can participate in spontaneous birthday celebrations by parents supplying 'treat box' or safe cup cakes stored in freezer in a labelled sealed container
Cooking/Food Technology	- Engage parents in discussion prior to cooking sessions and activities using food. - Remind all children to not share food they have cooked with others at school.
Science experiments	Engage parents in discussion prior to experiments containing foods.
Students picking up papers	Students at risk of food or insect sting anaphylaxis should be excused from this duty. Non rubbish collecting duties are encouraged.



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RISK	Considerations when you have a child at risk of anaphylaxis in your care
Music	• Music teacher to be aware, there should be no sharing of wind instruments e.g. recorders. Speak with the parent about providing the child's own instrument.
Art and craft classes	• Ensure containers used by students at risk of anaphylaxis do not contain allergens. e.g. egg white or yolk on an egg carton. • Activities such as face painting or mask making (when moulded on the face of the child), should be discussed with parents prior to the event, as products used may contain food allergens such as peanut, tree nut, milk or egg. • Care to be taken with play dough etc. Check that nut oils have not been used in manufacture. Discuss options with parent of wheat allergic child.
Canteen	• Does canteen offer foods that contain the allergen? • What care is taken to reduce the risk to a child with allergies who may order/purchase food? Strategies to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction can include: • Staff (including volunteer helpers) educated on food handling procedures and risk of cross contamination of foods said to be 'safe' • Child having distinguishable lunch order bag • Restriction on who serves the child when they go to the canteen • Discuss possibility of photos of the children at risk of anaphylaxis being placed in the canteen/children's service kitchen. • Encourage parents of child to visit canteen/Children's Service kitchen to view products available. • See Anaphylaxis Australia's School Canteen poster, Preschool/Playgroup posters and School Canteen Discussion Guide. www.allergyfacts.org.au
Sunscreen	• Parents of children at risk of anaphylaxis should be informed that sunscreen is offered to children. They may want to provide their own.
Hand washing	• Classmates encouraged to wash their hands after eating



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RISK	Considerations when you have a child at risk of anaphylaxis in your care
Part-time educators, casual relief teachers & religious instruction teachers Suggestions:	These educators need to know the identities of children at risk of anaphylaxis and should be aware of the school's management plans, which includes minimisation strategies initiated by the school community. Some casual staff have not received training in anaphylaxis management and emergency treatment. This needs to be considered when a teacher is chosen for a class with a child at risk of anaphylaxis and if this teacher is on playground/yard duty. • Casual staff, who work at school regularly, should be included in anaphylaxis training sessions to increase the likelihood that they recognise an allergic reaction and know how to administer the adrenaline autoinjector. • Schools should have interim educational tools such as autoinjector training devices and DVDs available to all staff. • A free online training course for teachers and Children's Service staff is available whilst waiting for face to face training by a DEECD nominated anaphylaxis education provider. Visit ASCIA www.allergy.org.au. This course can also be done as a refresher.
Use of food as counters	• Be aware of children with food allergies when deciding on 'counters' to be used in mathematics or other class lessons. Non-food 'counters' such as buttons /discs may be a safer option than chocolate beans.
Class rotations	• All teachers will need to consider children at risk of anaphylaxis when planning rotational activities for year level, even if they do not currently have a child enrolled who is at risk, in their class.
Class pets/ pet visitors /school farmyard	• Be aware that some animal feed contains food allergens. E.g. nuts in birdseed and cow feed, milk and egg in dog food, fish in fish food. • Chickens hatching in classroom. Children's Services facilities and Schools sometimes organise incubators from hatcheries and hatch chicks for fun and learning. Generally speaking, simply watching chicks hatch in an incubator poses no risk to children with egg allergy, but all children should be encouraged to wash their hands after touching the incubation box in case there is any residual egg content on it. There is a little more risk when it comes to children handling the chicks. Here are some suggestions to reduce the risk of a reaction and still enable the child with allergy to participate in the touch activity



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RISK	Considerations when you have a child at risk of anaphylaxis in your care
Class pets/ pet visitors /school farmyard	• The allergic child can touch a chick that hatched the previous day (i.e. a chick that is more than just a couple of hours old); no wet feathers should be present. • Encourage the parent/carer of the child with the allergy to be present during this activity so they can closely supervise their child and make sure the child does not put his/her fingers in their mouth. • If there is concern about the child having a skin reaction, consider the child wearing gloves. • All children need to wash hands after touching the chicks in case there is any residue of egg protein, in addition to usual hygiene purposes. Whilst care needs to be taken, this is an activity that most children can enjoy with some safe guards in place.
Incursions	• Prior discussion with parents if incursions include any food activities.
Excursions, Sports carnivals, Swimming program	• Teachers organising/attending excursion or sporting event should plan an emergency response procedure prior to the event. This should outline the roles and responsibilities of teachers attending, if an anaphylactic reaction occurs. This includes distribution of laminated cards to all attending teachers, detailing the following: • Location of event, including Melway reference or nearest cross street. <i>Procedure for calling ambulance, advising life threatening allergic reaction has occurred and adrenaline is required.</i>
Staff should also:	• Carry mobile phones. Prior to event, check that mobile phone reception is available and if not, consider other form of emergency communication i.e. walkie talkie. • Consider increased supervision depending on size of excursion/sporting event i.e. if students are split into groups at large venue e.g. zoo, or at large sports venue for sports carnival. • Consider adding a reminder to all parents regarding children with allergies on the excursion/sports authorisation form and encourage parents not to send in specific foods in lunches (e.g. food containing nuts). • Discourage eating on buses. • Check if excursion includes a food related activity, if so discuss with parent. • Ensure that all teachers are aware of the locatin of the emergency medical kit containing adenaline autoinjector.



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RISK	Considerations when you have a child at risk of anaphylaxis in your care
Medical Kits	(Student's own and school's autoinjector for general use) Medical kit containing ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis and adrenaline autoinjector should be easily accessible to child at risk and the adult/s responsible for their care at all times. On excursions ensure that the teacher accompanying the child's group carries the medical kit. For sporting events this may be more difficult, however, all staff and parent volunteers must always be aware of who has the kit and where it is. <i>Be aware - adrenaline autoinjectors should not be left sitting in the sun, in parked cars or buses.</i> Parents are often available to assist teachers on excursions in Children's Services and primary schools. If child at risk is attending without a parent, the child should remain in the group of the teacher who has been trained in anaphylaxis management, rather than be given to a parent volunteer to manage. This teacher should carry the medical kit.
School camps	Parent involvement at primary school camps is often requested. Many primary schools invite the parent of the child at risk of anaphylaxis to attend as a parent helper. Irrespective of whether child is attending primary school or secondary college, parents of child at risk should have face to face meeting with school staff/camp coordinator prior to camp to discuss safety including the following: School's emergency response procedures, should clearly outline roles and responsibilities of the teachers in policing prevention strategies and their roles and responsibilities in the event of an anaphylactic reaction. All teachers attending the camp should carry laminated emergency cards, detailing the location of the camp and correct procedure for calling ambulance, advising the call centre that a life threatening allergic reaction has occurred and adrenaline is required. Staff to practise with adrenaline autoinjector training devices (EpiPen® and AnaPen® Trainers) and view DVDs prior to camp.. Consider contacting local emergency services and hospital prior to camp and advise that xx children in attendance at xx location on xx date including child/ren at risk of anaphylaxis. Ascertain location of closest hospital, ability of ambulance to get to camp site area i.e. consider locked gates etc in remote areas. Confirm mobile phone network coverage for standard mobile phones prior to camp. If no access to mobile phone network, alternative needs to be discussed and arranged. Parents should be encouraged to provide two adrenaline autoinjectors along with the Action Plan for Anaphylaxis and any other required medications whilst the child is on the camp. - Clear advice should be communicated to all parents prior to camp on what foods are not allowed.



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RISK	Considerations when you have a child at risk of anaphylaxis in your care
	• Parents of child at risk of anaphylaxis and school need to communicate about food for the duration of the camp. Parent should communicate directly with the provider of the food/chef/caterer and discuss food options/menu, cross contamination risks, safest food choices, bringing own food. • Parents may prefer to provide all child's food for the duration of the camp. This is the safest option. If this is the case, storage and heating of food needs to be organised as well. Discussions by school staff and parents with the operators of the camp facility should be undertaken well in advance of camp. Example of topics that need to be discussed would be: 1. Possibility of removal of peanut/tree nut from menu for the duration of the camp. 2. Creation of strategies to help reduce the risk of an allergic reaction where the allergen cannot be removed i.e. egg, milk, wheat. A decision may be made to remove pavlova as an option for dessert if egg allergic child attending for example. 3. Awareness of cross contamination of allergens in general i.e. during storage, preparation and serving of food. 4. Discussion of menu for the duration of the camp. 5. Games and activities should not involve the use of known allergens. 6. Camp organisers need to consider domestic activities which they assign to children on camp. It is safer to have the child with food allergy set tables, for example, than clear plates and clean up. Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia has launched a new publication titled <i>Preparing for Camps and Overnight School Trips with Food Allergies</i>. This comprehensive booklet consists of concise and easy-to-read information and ideas on preparing for school camp when you have students at risk of anaphylaxis. To purchase or for more information call 1300 728 000 or visit www.allergyfacts.org.au



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RISK	Considerations when you have a child at risk of anaphylaxis in your care
*Insect sting allergy	Children who have a severe insect sting allergy and are at risk of anaphylaxis need to have their adrenaline autoinjector and Action Plan for Anaphylaxis easily accessible at all times. Strategies that reduce the risk of insect stings vary depending on the insect the person is allergic to. Strategies both at school and on excursions can include: • Avoiding being outdoors at certain times of the day • Using insect repellents that contain DEET (Diethyltoluamide, N, N - diethyl - 3- methylbenzamide) • Wearing light coloured clothing that covers most exposed skin • Avoid wearing bright clothing with 'flower' type prints • Wearing shoes at all times • Avoiding perfumes or scented body creams/deodorants • Wearing gloves when gardening • Avoid picking up rubbish which may attract insect/s • Being extra careful where there are bodies of water i.e. lake/pond/swimming pool. • Chlorinated pools attract bees • Drive with windows up in the car/windows closed in a bus • Keep your drink (glass/bottle/can) indoors or covered. Always check your drinks before you sip i.e. don't drink blindly from container. • Keep garbage bins covered – lids on • Keep grass areas mowed (reduce weed such as clover which attracts insects) • Wearing boots and thick clothing such as denim jeans if ant sting allergic and in area where specific ants reside. Avoid ant mounds • Not provoking bees, wasps or ants. Have mounds/nests removed by professionals • Removal of nests when students/teachers are not present • When putting in new plants consider location and select plants less likely to attract stinging insects



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RISK	Considerations when you have a child at risk of anaphylaxis in your care
	Things to consider when purchasing an adrenaline autoinjector for general use for your school or children's service Many Schools/Children's Services now have an adrenaline autoinjector for general use and the device specific Action Plan for Anaphylaxis in their first aid kit. If your facility has an autoinjector for general use, you need to consider availability of this device at School or Children's Service for: • Excursions • for school camp • for specialist activities (i.e. a debating group, music group or sports team going off campus) • even a walk to a local park A risk assessment needs to be done to see which group (i.e. the group staying at the facility or the group going on an outing) should have the device for general use at any given time or on any given day. Considerations can include • number of children attending outing • number of children at risk • location of the activity • location of emergency services • mobile phone access • food on location etc

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