



FACTSHEET

Children who are allergic to nut products

Medical advances have made everyone more aware of this condition, which now has an effective antidote. Since it is possible to trigger an allergic reaction quite innocently, we thought it important that as many parents as possible should know about the condition, for the safety of the children concerned.

1 How many children in the school have this allergy?

There are four in the school at the moment.

2 Is this a serious allergy?

Yes, very serious. It can cause anaphylactic shock, which is a life-threatening condition if it is not treated promptly.

3 How is it treated?

An injection of adrenalin is necessary as soon as possible. This counteracts the allergic reaction almost at once and the patient begins to recover.

4 Does the school have the right equipment on hand?

Yes, we have at least one EpiPen for each child with the allergy and more than 12 members of staff who are trained to administer it correctly. An EpiPen is the piece of equipment that delivers the injection of adrenalin. They are all stored in the School Office.

5 What causes a child to have this violent reaction?

If she/he eats something which contains any nut product. This could mean peanut butter, many biscuits, nut oils, breakfast cereals, chocolate spreads. Many foods contain nut-based ingredients of which we are usually unaware. The list of ingredients should **always** be checked to make sure that it is completely nut-free.

In addition, some children (and adults) react just as badly if they simply touch or inhale the vapours from nut products. Some nut oils are also present in many hand cream products.

Those with the allergy do not have to eat nuts to become ill.

6 What can I do to help?

Please, don't give your own child peanut butter sandwiches or any other food with nuts in for lunch or snack. She/he might sit beside one of the nut allergic children and set off an attack. If your child won't eat anything else, then please tell us, so that we know to keep them apart.

7 Are any nut-based foods served in school meals?

No, they have all been banned from the school kitchen.

8 If I help with cooking in school, do I need to be careful about any ingredients I buy or bring in?

Yes, all the warnings contained in Number 5 overleaf apply. We must be very vigilant to make sure that no nut-based ingredients are used.

9 What do I do if I am in school helping and the child with the nut allergy has an attack?

It is highly unlikely. Don't panic. But act promptly! Stay with the child yourself, but send another (sensible!) one to the Office to ask for Mr Brown, Mrs Benstead or Mrs Turner to come. Make sure they know the name of the sick child before they come. When help arrives, wait for any instructions you may be given. Then, if you are not needed to help go and tell the class teacher.

10 What does an attack look like?

This can vary from child to child. They will complain of itchy, prickly feeling around the mouth; abdominal pain; vomiting; diarrhoea.

You will see weals/rash on the skin; swelling may occur on the neck, face, lips and eyelids.

This Factsheet has not been issued to alarm you – simply to ensure that we take all reasonable precautions for the safety of these children. In all other respects, they are perfectly normal, healthy people and should be treated as such. It is simply that they do have a rare medical reaction which calls for special care and vigilance. I hope you will support us in this. If you would like any further information, please call in to the office – we will do our best to help.