



Achieve Lacrosse Allergy Awareness

An allergic reaction occurs when a person's immune system acts as if a protein (an allergen) in a food is harmful. Allergic reactions can be mild or severe. A severe allergic reaction is called anaphylaxis.

Allergy Safe Environment: Managing food allergy in a camp setting is a shared responsibility and includes staff, parents and children. While camps cannot be expected to be completely free of the foods that cause allergic reactions, they can aim to be safe environments for children with food allergy. Creating an allergy safe camp involves:

- Following policies and procedures to reduce the risk of accidental exposure to foods that are known to cause allergic reactions among the children in its care.
- Having a care plan for each child with food allergy that contains a copy of their *Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan*. The plan explains what to do in case of allergic reaction.
- Regularly training staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to respond to and care for a child who is having an allergic reaction.
- Store each child's auto-injectors in a secure unlocked place that is easy for all staff to access.
- Ensure the auto-injector of a child with severe food allergy is available before serving foods.

Snack Time Precautions: Even tiny amounts of an allergen can cause an allergic reaction.

- Have all children and staff wash their hands with soap and water before and after eating. This helps prevent food from getting on toys, clothing, or other surfaces.
- Clean all tables and surfaces well before and after eating.
- Supervise children while they are eating.
- Do not allow children to trade or share food, utensils, napkins, or food containers.
- Staff and campers must keep the camp allergy safe by not bringing in foods that could cause an allergic reaction.
- Parents will be notified if we have a camper with a food allergy, so that they can plan snacks without foods that could cause a reaction to a child with a food allergy.

Symptoms of a severe allergic reaction: can start within minutes of eating or being exposed to the food, but usually occur within 2 hours. Do not ignore early symptoms. When a reaction begins, it is important to respond right away.

- **Skin:** hives, swelling (including of the tongue, lips or face), itching, warmth, redness, rash, pale or blue colored skin.
- **Breathing:** coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain or tightness, throat tightness, hoarse voice, nasal congestion or hay fever-like symptoms (such as runny, itchy nose, watery eyes and sneezing), trouble swallowing.
- **Stomach:** vomiting, nausea, abdominal pain or diarrhea.
- **Heart:** weak pulse, feeling faint, dizzy or lightheaded, passing out.
- **Other:** anxiety, headache, metallic taste, or uterine cramps in teenage girls.

A severe reaction is treated with the prescribed medication called epinephrine. When a reaction begins, it is important to respond, give right away. Do not wait. Epinephrine will not cause harm to the child if it is given unnecessarily. Epinephrine comes in a pre-loaded syringe called an auto-injector. Epinephrine helps reverse the symptoms of an allergic reaction and can save the child's life.

Steps for treating a severe allergic reaction:

1. Use the auto-injector right away. Give the shot of epinephrine into the muscle of the outer-mid thigh, through clothing if necessary.
2. Call **9-1-1** or the local emergency number.
3. Lie the child down with their legs raised slightly. If they are nauseated or vomiting, they should lie on their side. Keep them lying down. Do not make them sit or stand up. If they are having difficulty breathing, let them sit up.
4. Do not leave the child alone.
5. If the child's symptoms do not get better or come back, give a second dose of epinephrine within 5 to 15 minutes after the first injection. Ensure the child gets to a hospital.

Achieve Lacrosse Staff is trained in how to respond to and care for a child who is having a severe allergic reaction. A child care provider with this training and knowledge will be immediately available for every child with food allergy.

Every child care provider will know:

- each child's allergy and how to help the child avoid their food allergens;
- where to find each child's care plan and *Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan*;
- where to find each child's epinephrine auto-injector;
- the signs and symptoms of a severe allergic reaction; and
- when to call **9-1-1** or local emergency number and how to communicate the health concern.