GOING TO SCHOOL WITH FOOD ALLERGIES

What you need to do

- Meet with school staff, including the school nurse, food service manager and teachers to let them know of your child’s allergy.
  - Start early – don’t wait until the school year starts!
- Provide information, including a WRITTEN EMERGENCY TREATMENT PLAN from your child’s doctor about the allergy including:
  - How to recognize an allergic reaction, how to treat it, who to contact, and how to activate emergency services (e.g., 911).
  - Include your child’s picture.
- Provide labeled medications and review expiration dates.
- Discuss where medications are kept and who will give them.
  - Medication should be unlocked and easily accessible.
- Review information about your child’s food allergy, including:
  - Safe and unsafe foods
  - Symptoms and treatment of an allergic reaction
- Work with your school to create and review a plan that addresses ways to provide a safe environment for your child throughout the day.
- Review with your child their responsibilities (age-appropriate) including:
  - No food sharing/trading or eating unsafe foods
  - Reporting any symptoms to an adult
  - Carrying/using medications
  - Hand washing with soap and water before and after meals/snacks is suggested. Hand sanitizers do not remove the allergen

Helpful tips

- Provide your child’s safe food and/or ensure others know how to do so
- Suggest a “no food sharing” policy.
- Depending upon age/allergies, review increased supervision during meals.
- Suggest “rewards” that are not food-related (e.g., stickers).
- Remind staff about avoiding/notifying about crafts that include food.
  - e.g., wheat in modeling clay, egg in finger paint, food craft projects
- Discuss school bus safety (e.g., no eating on the bus)
- Discuss a plan for: field trips, parties, & notification of substitute teachers
- Consider medical identification jewelry

Resources

1. For further assistance, you may speak with your school district’s 504 coordinator.
2. This program has additional information sheets that you may find helpful
5. Your state may have a School Food Allergy Management Plan with additional information.

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