

As schools prepare for students this fall, please remember to review your emergency preparedness. Each campus and school system should have plans in place to respond to emergencies, mitigating loss of life until emergency responders can arrive. Effective emergency plans are not just written policies and procedures but are practiced through scenarios and drills on a regular basis so that everyone knows how to react in a real emergency.

Anaphylaxis is a growing concern that is life threatening. Regarding anaphylaxis, there are 2 arenas to consider. Those with a previously known diagnosis of anaphylaxis, usually with epinephrine already prescribed, often without updated prescriptions, about 10-18% of school-aged children; and those yet unknown. Anyone is at risk of developing a sudden onset of anaphylaxis. 35-50% of all cases of anaphylaxis in emergency settings are due to food allergies. According to National Association of School Nurses (2015) "20-25 % of epinephrine administrations involve students or staff whose allergy was unknown at the time of the event". School nurses across our state have shared spine tingling personal testimonies of sudden onset anaphylaxis occurring in their school with previously unknown students; they also share how crippled they were in this situation without the drug readily available. We need to equip school nurses to respond quickly and as licensed professionals!

Epinephrine is the universal standard treatment. Sadly, in the United States the misfortune of losing the life of students from anaphylaxis has happened at school. Epinephrine is safe, no absolute contradictions and delays morbidity and mortality (NASN, 2015). Without stock epinephrine auto-injectors, schools and especially school nurses are under-prepared to respond professionally to a sudden onset of anaphylaxis. With state laws that now allow school systems to maintain a stock supply of epinephrine auto-injectors, this article may be helpful in taking those steps you need to respond should someone at your school develop a first time reaction. Follow these steps for developing your stock epinephrine program.

- Obtain prescription
- Develop protocol
- Dosing between pediatric and adults
- Storage, packaging, and delivery of medications
- Initial and on-going training of unlicensed staff
- Documentation of epinephrine administration in an emergency situation

On behalf of school nurses across our state please consider supporting and sponsoring stock epinephrine auto-injectors in your areas and communities. Contact the school nurses in your areas and feel free to contact me for further guidance.



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