

Anaphylaxis Canada



Living Confidently With Food Allergy

A guide for parents and families



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PLEASE READ THIS NOTE BEFORE READING THE HANDBOOK

The information in this handbook is general in nature and for information and educational purposes only. It is meant to help people learn how to manage a child's allergies. It is not meant to give specific medical advice, recommendations, diagnosis, or treatment.

Readers should not rely on any information contained in this handbook as a replacement or substitute for professional medical advice or diagnosis or treatment. Nor should they delay getting professional medical advice or treatment because of information contained in this handbook. Medical knowledge is constantly developing.

Please speak with your child's doctor or other healthcare professional before making any medical decision that affects your child or if you have any questions or concerns about their food allergies.

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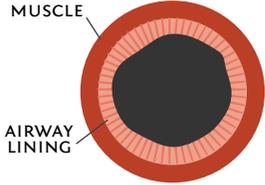
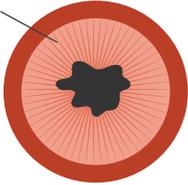
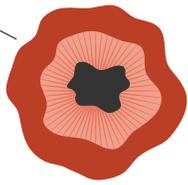


At Risk Groups - Asthma & Teenagers

Food Allergy & Asthma

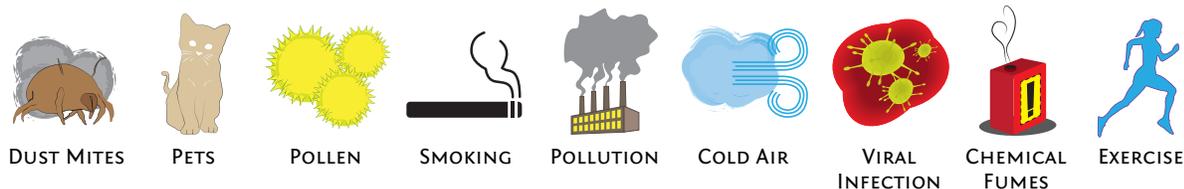
Asthma is a chronic disease that affects the lungs. People who have food allergies and asthma are at an increased risk of a severe allergic reaction.

Two changes happen in the airways of a person with asthma. One is inflammation (irritated and swollen lungs), causing mucus to be produced, and the second is tightening of the muscles around the airway, causing the airway to become smaller. With increased mucus and a smaller airway, it is difficult to move air in and out of the lungs.

NORMAL AIRWAY	ASTHMATIC AIRWAY- INFLAMMATION	ASTHMATIC AIRWAY- TIGHTENED MUSCLES
 <p>MUSCLE AIRWAY LINING</p>	 <p>SWELLING</p>	 <p>MUSCLE TIGHTENS</p>
<p>In people without asthma, the muscles around the airways are relaxed, allowing the airways to stay open. There is no swelling or mucus inside the airways.</p>	<p>In people with asthma, the inside of the airways can get red, swollen, and filled with mucus.</p>	<p>In people with asthma, the muscles around the airways can spasm and squeeze tighter. This leaves less room for air to pass through.</p>

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Symptoms of asthma include cough, being short of breath, wheezing and tightness of the chest. There are many different “triggers” that cause asthma symptoms. People can have different asthma triggers, and symptoms can vary from mild to severe.



Asthma is a chronic disease and often lasts a person’s entire life. If your child has asthma, it is very important that they are seen on a regular basis by their doctor and that their asthma is well controlled.



Control your child's asthma by:

- Avoiding contact with their specific asthma “triggers”.
- Taking the medicine prescribed by their doctor.
- Following their asthma action plan.
- Having regular follow-up visits with their doctor.

You can learn about asthma management by speaking with an asthma educator or participating in an asthma education program.

Children with both food allergy and asthma are at risk of having a more severe allergic reaction.

Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan: _____ (name)

This person has _____ (allergy (anaphylaxis) to: _____)

Epinephrine Auto-Injector: EpiPen, Twinject, Allerject

Age: EpiPen® Jr 0.15 mg Twinject® 0.15 mg Allerject™ 0.15 mg

Location of Auto-Injector(s):

Previous anaphylactic reaction: Person is at greater risk. If person has difficulty breathing, give epinephrine.

Signs and symptoms:

Severe allergic reaction might have ANY of the following:

Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat; difficulty breathing; hives, warmth, redness, rash; dizziness, lightheadedness, fainting; wheezing, shortness of breath; watery eyes, sneezing, trouble swallowing; stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea; metallic taste; loss of consciousness.

Instructions:

1. Give a dose of epinephrine (EpiPen, Twinject, or Allerject) at the first sign of a known or suspected severe allergic reaction.
2. Call 9-1-1 or the emergency department if someone is having a life-threatening allergic reaction.
3. Give a second dose of epinephrine in 5 to 15 minutes if the reaction continues or worsens.
4. Go to the nearest hospital immediately (ideally by ambulance), even if symptoms are mild or have stopped. The person could need more or come back, even after prompt treatment. Stay in the hospital for an appropriate period of observation as decided by the emergency department physician (generally about 4 hours).
5. Call emergency contact person (e.g. parent, guardian).

Emergency Contact Information

Name	Relationship	Home Phone	Work Phone	Cell Phone

The undersigned patient, parent, or guardian authorizes any adult to administer epinephrine to the above-named person in the event of an anaphylactic reaction, as described above. This protocol has been recommended by the patient's physician.

Patient/Parent/Guardian Signature Date _____ On file Date

Ask the doctor to help you fill out both an **asthma action plan** and **Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan**. Don't forget to discuss the signs and symptoms of asthma and anaphylaxis with your child's doctor.

If your child has difficulty breathing during an allergic reaction, **give the auto-injector before giving asthma medication**. Keep in mind that epinephrine will treat severe asthmatic symptoms as well as anaphylaxis. Asthma is a major risk factor for death in severe allergic reactions caused by food.^{2 16}

Teaching Children

- Involve your child in managing their asthma.
- Teach your child when and how to use their asthma medication.
- Tell your child to talk to an adult if they are having asthma symptoms such as coughing, chest tightness, wheezing or shortness of breath.

Food Allergy & Teenagers

Teenagers tend to spend more time outside of the home and take on more of a lead role in managing their food allergies. At the same time, they face increased pressure to fit in with their peers. Some teens engage in risky behaviours, such as not reading labels, knowingly eating foods that could contain their allergen or not carrying emergency medicine when they are out with friends.^{28 29} These behaviours increase the risk for allergic reactions and death.^{16 29 30}

Empower your teen to take an active role in managing their allergy

- Encourage your teen to ask their doctor questions.
- Make sure your teen can use an auto-injector.
- Suggest trusted resources, such as teen websites created by Anaphylaxis Canada or Food Allergy Research & Education (FARE).

Encourage your teen to tell their friends about their food allergy

- Friends need to know about your child's food allergies in the event of an allergic reaction. They should be able to recognize symptoms of a reaction and know what to do in an emergency.
- Allergy management will become a routine for friends too and will not be “a big deal” if they are educated.

Help your teen plan ahead for social situations

- Gather menus from popular restaurants. Encourage them to practice making good choices and informing restaurant staff about food allergies. Call ahead to find out about safe options.
- Problem-solve with your teen about how and where they will carry emergency medication.



Talk about alcohol and drugs

- These substances affect a person’s judgment. Explain to your teen that if they are under the influence, they will have difficulty making clear decisions or recognizing symptoms of a reaction.
- Alcoholic beverages can include common allergens (e.g. Amaretto liqueur includes almond).

Talk about dating and relationships

- Give your teen the facts about food allergies and dating, even if the topic is uncomfortable.
- Suggest ways to tell a partner about food allergies.
- Make sure your teen knows that kissing can cause an allergic reaction if someone has eaten an allergenic food up to several hours before a kiss.⁵
- Make sure your teen feels comfortable suggesting restaurants that are good choices for them (for example, restaurants that you have checked out together) or speaking up if they think that a restaurant is a risky choice.
- Suggest to your teen that both meals (your teen and their date’s meals) should be allergy-safe. This is especially important if teens will be kissing.⁵

Encourage open communication

- Let your teen know that you are open to all questions and want to know how they are feeling. Allow your teen to talk about “rule breaking” without the risk of punishment.



Is your child a preteen or teen?

Visit www.whyriskit.ca or
www.foodallergy.org to learn more about
managing allergies during these years.



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