

10 TIPS FOR BACK TO SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN WITH FOOD ALLERGIES



ALLERGY NEW ZEALAND

1. **Anaphylaxis Action Plan:** check it is still current and if not, ask your child's doctor for an updated one, signed by them, including details of prescribed/recommended medications e.g. EpiPen, antihistamines, asthma inhalers. Insert a recent photo of your child. Provide copies to the school.

Go to: <https://www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/anaphylaxis-resources/ascia-action-plan-for-anaphylaxis> for Action Plans

2. **EpiPen:** check the expiry date on your child's EpiPen(s), and replace if necessary. If one has been left at the school, ask to see it to check the date, also that the adrenaline is clear (if discoloured or cloudy it will need to be replaced). Remember, if you register with www.epiclub.co.nz they will send you a reminder when your EpiPen is due to expire; they'll also send you a free training kit.

3. Sort out a **container for your child's medication**, including their EpiPen, to be kept at school. It will need to be clearly labelled with your child's name, and includes a copy of their Anaphylaxis Action Plan. If your child is going to carry their EpiPen with them, check out the adrenaline auto-injector pouches available on Allergy New Zealand's shop online:

<http://www.allergy.org.nz/Shop+online/Adrenaline+pouches.html>





4. If you haven't already, **arrange to meet with your child's teacher**, school or public health nurse, and other staff as appropriate, to discuss a healthcare plan. This is for the purpose of establishing policies and procedures to minimise the risk of your child accidentally ingesting the food they are allergic too. These will need to be age-appropriate, in context of the school and facilities, and taking into account locums, school outings, class events, and sport and other activities.

Check **Allergy New Zealand's Guidelines for Early Childhood Services and Schools** online:

<https://secure.zeld.com/site/allergynz/files/Allergy%20and%20anaphylaxis%20guidelines%20%20green.pdf>

ASCIA's 2015 Update:

https://www.allergy.org.au/images/stories/pospapers/Vale_et_al-2015-Journal_of_Paediatrics_and_Child_Health.pdf

Tips from our volunteer network are also available on

<http://allergynewzealand.blogspot.co.nz/2013/02/health-care-plan-for-kids-going-back-to.html>

5. Check school staff receive training on anaphylaxis including regular (annual) updates. If they don't currently have access to training, recommend they do the free ASCIA online course, which is available on: <https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/anaphylaxis-e-training-schools-and-childcare>.

Schools can also register with www.epiclub.co.nz to receive a free EpiPen education kit. You (and your child if old enough) could do the ASCIA anaphylaxis community e-training:

<https://www.allergy.org.au/patients/anaphylaxis-e-training-first-aid-community>

6. Teach your child the key safety steps in managing their food allergy. See the [Starship.org](http://www.starship.org) recommendations for 5 year-olds: <https://www.starship.org.nz/media/455294/going-to-school-with-food-allergies.pdf>. Allergy New Zealand's booklet "Letting Go: Teaching your food-allergic child responsibility" is available through our shop online and is free to members:

<http://www.allergy.org.nz/shop/Shop+online/allergy+new+zealand+booklets+leaflets+and+poster/Letting+go%3A+teaching+your+food-allergic+child+responsibility.html>



7. **Check the school has a policy of 'no sharing of food or drink'**, and how this is implemented and monitored. Make sure you will be contacted in advance if an event involving shared food is being planned.

8. Help your child **talk about their food allergy** and have the support of their classmates. This could be by providing the teacher with resources such as books that can be read to the class (see the Thai series on <http://www.allergy.org.nz/shop/Shop+online/Books.html>).

9. For **teenagers**, there is a great interactive website for them to get information and share experiences with others with food allergy <https://250k.org.au/>

10. **250K also has resources for schools** – pass these on to the teachers, as a great way to raise awareness and educate the school community:

https://www.allergy.org.au/images/pcc/Allergy_Aware_presentation_primary_school_FINAL.pdf

https://www.allergy.org.au/images/pcc/Allergy_Aware_presentation_secondary_school_FINAL.pdf



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