

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF CHLOE - FOOD ALLERGY AWARENESS SUPPORTING NOTES

A Day in the Life of Chloe has been developed to increase awareness of food allergy as a serious and growing health issue and help educate young people and adults about the potentially life threatening nature of the disease.

The session is engaging and motivational, providing students and school staff with an understanding of the serious nature of anaphylaxis and an appreciation of everyone's role in supporting young people with food allergies and helping to manage risk. Every school is likely to have at least one pupil who is severely food-allergic, and many schools will have more.

Key messages of the film;

- To raise awareness of what day to day life is really like for someone with a severe food allergy.
- Demonstrating how serious food allergy can be.
- Being respectful of those who have allergies and to treat their requests seriously.
- What to do if someone starts to have an anaphylactic reaction.
- How to ensure food is prepared safely for someone with a food allergy.

WHY WE ALL SHOULD BE MORE AWARE OF ALLERGIES

There has been a dramatic increase in allergic diseases in recent years, it is therefore important that everyone in school knows what to do to make it as safe as possible for those with allergies and to know how to help them if they have a reaction.

In 2017 the Anaphylaxis campaign were alerted to nine food allergy related fatalities most of which concerned children. Unfortunately one of these deaths occurred in east Lancashire, 15 year old Megan Lee suffered an allergic reaction in December 2016 and sadly passed away a few days later.

Anaphylactic shock is a severe and rapid onset allergic response, which can result in circulatory collapse, coma and death. Signs of severe reaction can include rashing or hives anywhere on the body, a sense of impending doom, swelling of throat and mouth, vomiting, difficulty breathing, a drop in blood pressure and loss of consciousness.

Treatment for allergic reactions is needed quickly and involves the use of anti-histamines and adrenaline auto-injectors (sometimes referred to as Epi-Pens but this is one of three trade names). **It is important that staff and pupils can recognise the symptoms and feel confident to react if the situation should arise.**

WHAT TO DO IF SOMEONE IS GOING INTO ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK

Instructions differ depending on the brand of auto-injector used. Please ensure you read the instructions carefully on the pen before use.

Step 1 – Stay calm, keep talking to the person.

Step 2 – Follow the instruction on their pen.

Step 3 – Remove the cap. This may be covering the needle or in the top end.

Step 4 – Follow the instructions on how to inject, when to remove the injector and any massage requirements.

Step 5 – Call 999 and ask for an ambulance. State you have a patient suffering from anaphylaxis.

Step 6 – A second dose may be administered after 5-15 minutes, if the patient has been prescribed one.

ALLERGY AWARE – MANAGING RISK

It is important to create a culture whereby those with allergies can participate in daily school life and not feel excluded and that too much emphasis is not placed on the allergic person being vulnerable or victims. They are normal people, living with a stressful situation, the food allergy does not determine who they are.

Allergy sufferers have to adapt through avoidance of allergens; taking care to avoid cross contaminations of foods; carefully and consistently reading food labels; and often facing limits on social activities where food is involved (*or sometimes not going out at all*). It is important that they can rely on the support of peers and adults.

Bullying a child with a food allergy can range from taunting the child to physically assaulting with the allergen. Educating everyone in the school environment about food allergies will provide a more inclusive climate and aim to create more tolerance and understanding.

HOW CAN YOU HELP PROMOTE AWARENESS

- Deliver '*A Day in the Life of Chloe*' as part of your whole school approach either during school assemblies or as part of any health awareness information days.
- Create an allergy aware environment i.e. consider restricting food in certain areas.
- Display '*A Day in the Life of Chloe*' posters around the school.
- Get your school council involved in allergy awareness raising, maybe deliver some peer education, articles in your newsletter or on your website.
- Consider encouraging staff to undertake **AllergyWise anaphylaxis online training for schools.**

This course is designed to ensure that key staff in schools are fully aware of the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis, how to provide emergency treatment and the implications for management of severely allergic children in school.

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-training/allergywise-training/for-schools/>

Facts and information courtesy of Allergy UK and Anaphylaxis Campaign

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AROUND ALLERGIES YOU MAY FIND THE FOLLOWING LINKS USEFUL;

Anaphylaxis Campaign

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk>

Issy and Ben's Story – an anaphylaxis campaign film for those working or living with younger people with allergies

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/campaigning/living-anaphylactic-allergies-izzy-bens-story/>

Take the Kit – an anaphylaxis campaign film to encourage young people to take their Adrenaline auto injector/epi-pen with them wherever they go.

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/campaigning/takethekit/>

Online training for first aiders

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/training-for-first-aid-trainers/>

Online training for school nurses

<https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-training/allergywise-training/for-healthcare-professionals/>

Allergy UK

<https://www.allergyuk.org>

Whole school allergy and awareness management (Allergy UK)

<https://allergyuk.org/schools/whole-school-allergy-awareness-and-management>

Spare Pens in Schools - Spare pens can be purchased by schools from a pharmaceutical supplier, without prescription for use in such emergencies. New legislation allows school staff to administer an emergency Adrenaline Auto-Injector to any child who has been assessed as being at risk of anaphylaxis.

<http://www.sparepensinschools.uk>

For School Kitchens, Food Businesses and Caterers

FSA Northern Ireland MenuCal – online allergen calculator and training

<https://www.menucalni.co.uk/Account/LogOn?ReturnUrl=%2f>

FSA online allergy training

<http://allergytraining.food.gov.uk/>