



<b>Policy Document Name</b>	<b>Allergies and Nut Awareness Policy</b>
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## Allergies and Nut Awareness Policy

### Rationale

Coromandel Valley PS aims to construct and promote a safe and supportive learning environment. Students, parents, carers and staff may have anaphylactic (severe allergic) conditions, that include nut allergies. This means that exposure at school may constitute a risk to their health and wellbeing. It is therefore not possible to totally guarantee that the environment will be completely free of potential hazards due to current food processing practices. The emphasis is therefore on raising awareness and adopting reasonable procedures termed as 'Allergy and Nut Awareness'.

### Aims

- Provide a safe school environment
- Raise awareness of severe allergies with all members of the school community
- Show care and concern for others within the wider community who may have anaphylactic (severe allergic) conditions
- Provide support for students with severe allergies and their families
- Educate and support students to enable them to manage their own allergies at school and in the wider community.

### Role of the Leadership team

- Inform all new parents/caregivers of the Coromandel Valley Primary School's Allergies and Nut Awareness Policy during the enrolment process and to make it accessible on the school's website
- To regularly inform the school community via newsletters and other correspondence about the Allergies and Nut Awareness Policy
- Will ensure staff participate in training opportunities to understand how to deal with Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reactions)
- Raise staff awareness about food that is brought into the staffroom and during consumption in classrooms and at school events
- Liaise and support the Canteen staff to comply with Allergy and Nut Awareness policy
- Ensure staff are made aware of students or other staff who have anaphylactic responses, including nut allergy
- Ensure appropriate signage is placed in prominent areas e.g. Front Office, Canteen, Gymnasium acknowledging that due to food processing practices it is impractical to completely eliminate nut or nut products entirely from an environment where there is food, thus the school is "Allergy and Nut Aware"



# Coromandel Valley Primary School



- Encourage staff to promptly communicate with parents/caregivers if food containing nuts or nut products, or those that may put students at risk is sent or brought to school.

## Role of Staff

- Inform and support students and staff with severe allergic reactions
- Inform and support students and their families about this policy
- Supervise students during lunch eating time and to be vigilant in regard to this policy. Students who bring food to school that contains nuts or nut products or foods that put other students at risk will be asked to eat food away from other students and to wash hands before going to play. Teachers will then contact the child's family to explain our policy and offer support in providing alternatives for food at school
- Encourage students not to share food
- Ensure information about this policy is included in notes that go home about shared food opportunities e.g. class parties and excursions
- Participate in training to understand procedures related to anaphylaxis as the need arises
- Encourage all students to wash hands after eating.

## Role of Parents / Caregivers

- Be aware of the Coromandel Valley Primary School's Allergies and Nut Awareness Policy
- To check ingredients in any food they send to school with their child/ren
- To not send food to school that contains nuts or nut products. This includes products such as peanut paste, 'Nutella', most nuts, peanut cooking oil and other foods that may contain nut products. This information will be distributed regularly throughout the year through school newsletters, class newsletters, on the school website and in the school enrolment pack.
- Understand that students who bring food that contains nuts or nut products will be asked to eat that food away from other students and to thoroughly wash their hands after eating.

## Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed with students, parents, caregivers and community input as part of the school's review cycle.

**This school acknowledges that due to food processing practices it is impractical to totally eliminate nuts or nut products entirely from a learning environment where there is food. Many food packaging labels include the phrase 'may contain traces of nuts', thus the name 'Allergy and Nut Aware' school.**

**We acknowledge that nuts are the highest risk food group so therefore request that nut products are not brought to school.**

## Appendix Information

### What is Anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a more severe allergic reaction that can affect the skin, respiratory, gastro-intestinal and cardiovascular systems. It requires immediate medical attention. Anaphylaxis usually occurs within 20 minutes to 2 hours after exposure to the allergen and can rapidly become life threatening.



Knowing the triggers is the first step in prevention. It is important that students and staff are aware of any food allergens and/or other triggers. All staff needs to be able to recognise symptoms of anaphylaxis and be prepared to respond without delay according to the child's Medical Management Plan.

## Common triggers

- **Food** - Milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, sesame, fish, shellfish, wheat and soy are the most common food triggers however; any food can trigger anaphylaxis. It is important to understand that some students and adults may have a life threatening reaction from exposure to even very small amounts of food. In some extreme instances just the smell of particular foods being cooked or even touching someone who has eaten the food can trigger a reaction.
- **Bites and Stings** - Bee, wasp and jack jumper ant stings are the most common triggers of anaphylaxis to insect stings. For some, even ticks, green ants and fire ants can also trigger anaphylaxis.
- **Medication** - Both over the counter and prescribed medications can cause life threatening allergic reactions for some students or adults as can some herbal medicines.

## Common Symptoms

In some instances, staff may not be aware that a student has an allergy, as he /she might not yet have experienced their first allergic reaction to a trigger. Some common symptoms include:

### Mild to moderate allergic reaction

- Nose and eye irritation
- Hives and eczema
- Tingling of the mouth
- Welts or body redness
- Swelling of the face, lips, eyes
- Vomiting, abdominal pain

### Severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis)

- Difficult/noisy breathing
- Swelling of the tongue
- Swelling or tightness in the throat
- Difficulty talking or hoarse voice
- Wheeze or persistent cough
- Persistent dizziness or collapse
- Pale and floppy (young children)

## How is an anaphylactic reaction treated?

All students who have an anaphylactic reaction to certain foods, have an Emergency Plan (Health Care Plan) that must be followed at school to ensure the most effective treatment is provided to them. This could involve giving antihistamine, administering an adrenaline injection, and calling an ambulance. Should an Emergency Plan be activated at the school, the parents or caregivers must be notified immediately.

## Why are we a nut aware environment?

We currently have students who have anaphylactic reactions to nuts. These reactions can be triggered by contact, ingestion or inhalation. It can also include contamination of equipment whether this is play equipment, desks or other classroom materials. For example, if a student ate a peanut butter or Nutella sandwich and touched any play equipment, a student with a severe allergy, could suffer an anaphylactic reaction from touching the same equipment. The resulting potential life threatening medical emergency could be avoided by minimising exposure to nuts.

## Two of the hardest things for parents and caregivers of a student at risk of anaphylaxis to do are:

- send their child to school and feel confident they will be in a safe environment
- feel confident that others understand that this is a life threatening condition and is not about being over-reacting parents/caregivers

We request that staff, students, parents, caregivers, including grandparents, read this policy and do not send any foods that contain nuts or nut products to school to support our aim to be an Allergy and Nut Awareness School. For more information log onto [www.allergy.org.au](http://www.allergy.org.au)