



Education is that which liberates

# Nut Policy

## The Swaminarayan School

260 Brentfield Road

Neasden

NW10 8HE

Tel No: 0208 965 8381

Fax No: 0208 961 4042

[www.swaminarayan.brent.sch.uk](http://www.swaminarayan.brent.sch.uk)

**Governors in charge of Health and Safety:** Mahendra Amin/Shamit Saglani

**Author:** Mark Reddington

**Last reviewed:** Mark Reddington 1 April 2017

**Next review date:** 20 June 2017

## **Policy for managing nut & other allergies**

### **Introduction**

ANAPHYLAXIS is a severe allergic reaction at the extreme end of the allergy spectrum, affecting the entire body, and can occur within minutes of exposure. The main causes are attributed to nuts, seeds and seafood but other agents such as penicillin are also recognized causes of such a reaction. This policy focuses on the management of nut allergies.

One approach could be to ban nuts from The Swaminarayan School (TSS); however, the **Anaphylaxis Campaign** highlights a number of problems with this approach as follows:

- It would be impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that the School is nut free, given that pupils regularly bring in food from home and food items bought on the way to School
- There would be a risk that children with allergies might be led into a false sense of security
- The nut ban would be seen as a precedent for demands to ban other potentially 'risky' foods.

There is a strong case to be argued that children with food allergies will develop a better awareness and understanding of how to manage their allergies if they grow up in an environment where allergens are regularly present.

### **Policy**

The Swaminarayan School aims to eliminate the contact with nuts although we recognise that this cannot be guaranteed. This policy serves to set out measures to reduce the risk to those children and adults who may suffer an anaphylactic reaction if exposed to nuts to which they are sensitive. The school aims to protect children who have allergies to nuts yet also help them, as they grow up, to take responsibility as to what foods they can eat and to be aware of where they may be put at risk.

Within the catering facilities at the School, we have taken precautions to minimise the risk of anaphylaxis occurring. We do not knowingly use nuts and associated nut products in our kitchens. Pupils with known food allergies are introduced to key members of the catering team, on their first day at the school, and are encouraged to seek guidance from catering staff – on a daily basis, if necessary – on what they can have for lunch.

It is recognised that, whilst most severe allergic reactions are the result of food ingestion, reactions can be triggered by touching surfaces – such as computer or piano keyboards. There are a number of hand sanitizer dispensers located around the school, including the music and IT areas.

It is also important to emphasise that severe reactions can occur as a result of individuals being susceptible to airborne allergens.

The success of minimising anaphylaxis – and all other allergen reactions - requires the co-operation of all pupils, staff and parents. Parents must not provide pupils with snacks and cakes that contain nuts and sesame seeds.

### **Staff**

The onus falls on all staff to read and follow this policy. Visitors to the school will be asked if they have allergies and this is to be highlighted on their visitors badge should a reaction occur and that a correct diagnosis can be undertaken by a qualified First Aider on site.

Staff and volunteers must ensure they do not bring in or consume nut products within any part of the school and ensure they follow good hand washing practice.

Caution must be taken at certain times of year such as celebrations (Easter, Diwali, Christmas etc) when food may be brought or donated. If pupils or staff distribute food care must be taken to ensure that no nuts are included in the product. Fruit or dried fruit alternatives are advised.

All product packaging must be checked for warnings directed at nut allergy sufferers and if the following or similar are displayed, the product must not be used in school without supervision of staff and supervised hand washing:

- Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers
- This product contains nuts
- This product may contain traces of nuts.

### **Parents**

The staff/School MUST be notified of any known or suspected allergy to nuts and provide all needed information detailed on their child's individual healthcare plan.

Parents must not bring in any food or treats (except in Kindergarten and Nursery). Likewise, for snack and lunch box choices, if you're unsure about a selection please refer to Appendix I of this policy which contains a listing of nut based foods.

Parents must ensure that the appropriate medication, specific to their child, is made available to School staff.

### **Packaging**

Packaging must be checked for the following warnings:

- Not suitable for nut allergy sufferers
- This product contains nuts
- This product may contain traces of nuts.

Lunch box items will be removed by staff and replaced with snack items if containing nuts or nut products. All children are regularly reminded about the good hygiene practice of washing hands before and after eating which helps to reduce the risk of secondary contamination. All children should be taught to recognise an allergic reaction. Likewise, children are reminded and carefully supervised to minimise the act of food sharing with their friends.

### **Health Plans and Emergency Response**

A listing of trained first aiders is displayed throughout the school. First Aid procedures are co-ordinated by our Welfare Officer and there is a team of staff trained in both First Aid and Paediatric First Aid to provide support should an emergency response be required. We have individual healthcare plans for children with allergies and allergy lists are displayed highlighting healthcare plan in place, triggers and medication. Medication will be stored, administered and documented in accordance with our First Aid Policy. Staff and parents are made aware of this policy and the symptoms associated with anaphylaxis.

## **Trips**

Parental responsibility lies in ensuring nut free food is packed for their children on trips by checking ingredients thoroughly and signing a declaration prior to the trip taking place that care has been taken to ensure this. A listing of foods containing nuts is in Appendix I of this policy for guidance.

Risk assessment documentation needs to highlight pupils (or staff/volunteers) who have a nut allergy (or other medical condition) and that the required medication is brought and administered by a First Aider.

## **Late Stay/Early Arrival**

A list of pupils within the school who have an allergy and required medications is to be held within a first aid pack, accessible by staff. Duty staff are to be informed of procedures in regard to this, recognising symptoms and procedures.

## **Symptoms following an allergic reaction**

Anaphylaxis varies in severity. Sometimes it causes only mild itchiness and swelling, but in some people it can cause sudden death. Anaphylaxis can lead to death if breathing becomes severely obstructed or if blood pressure becomes extremely low (known as shock). If symptoms start soon after contact with the allergen and rapidly get worse, this indicates that the reaction is more severe.

### **Other symptoms:**

Swollen eyes, lips, genitals, hands, feet and other areas (this is called angioedema), itching, a strange metallic taste in the mouth, sore, red, itchy eyes, changes in heart rate a sudden feeling of extreme anxiety or apprehension itchy skin or nettle-rash (hives),unconsciousness due to very low blood pressure abdominal cramps, vomiting or diarrhoea, or nausea and fever.

Whilst the School will exercise all due care and attention, pupils are expected to self-manage their allergy having an understanding of:

- Which foods are safe / unsafe
- When to ask staff to change (self service) serving utensils, if they think cross-contamination has taken place
- Their specific symptoms, if an allergic reaction occurs
- Their responsibility to carry their EpiPen with them at all times
- Who to advise, if and when an allergic reaction happens
- Letting friends and staff know about their allergy, in case of emergency
- When to seek guidance (and from whom) – if in doubt

It seems clear that the number of affected people and types of food allergy is increasing and it is only with a greater awareness of these issues, and with pupils, staff and parents all working together, that we can significantly reduce the risk of allergic reactions occurring.

## **Further guidance**

The Swaminarayan School First Aid Policy A7-E4 (2016)

The Human Medicines Regulations (2012)

Managing Medicines in Schools and Early Years Settings (DfES 2005)

## **Appendix I – Nut based Foods (this is not an exhaustive list but a guide)**

The following is an indicative guide on foods which may contain nuts.

### **Foods to avoid**

#### **Oils**

Blended Oils, Unrefined / Gourmet Peanut, Arachis and Groundnut oils.

#### **Biscuits**

All Biscuits, Almonds, Coconut biscuits, Macaroons, or Nut Oils.

#### **Preserves**

Peanut Butter, Chestnut Puree, Chocolate and Hazel Spread, Praline Spread, Sweet Mincemeat.

#### **Cakes**

Christmas Cake, Fruit Cake, Stollen, Marzipan containing cakes, Carrot Cake, Passion Cake, Cakes bought in Delicatessen, Cakes containing vegetable oil.

#### **Cereals**

Crunchy Nut Cornflakes, Fruit & Fibre, Muesli, Shreddies, Fruitful, etc.,

#### **Dips & Sauces**

Pesto Sauce, Waldorf Salad.

#### **Vegetarian Food**

Nut Loaf, Vegeburgers (Some products may be OK - Check Labels).

#### **Desserts**

Nut Yoghurt, Nut Ice-creams, Cakes, Puddings containing nuts.

#### **Sweets**

Nuts, Nougat, Nut Brittle, Halva, Snickers, Topic, Fruit & Nut, Bounty, Toblerone, Liquorice Allsorts, Pralines, Florentines. Always Check Labels.

#### **Others**

Some Chinese Foods e.g. Satay.

It is also advisable to avoid Creams and Shampoos containing nut extracts.

**Always check the labels on all food purchased**

#### **Source:**

<https://www.allergyuk.org/peanut-and-tree-nut-allergy/peanut-and-tree-nut-allergy#foods-to-avoid>