

ALLERGY EMERGENCY CARD

WHAT IT IS, AND HOW TO USE IT

Allergy Emergency Cards are designed to be used in an emergency, when a student is showing symptoms of a severe allergic reaction. These symptoms may include:

- swelling of the throat and tongue
- difficulty breathing or breathing very fast
- difficulty swallowing, tightness in the throat or a hoarse voice
- wheezing, coughing or noisy breathing
- feeling tired or confused
- feeling faint, dizzy, fainting or collapse
- skin that feels cold to the touch
- blue, grey or pale skin, lips or tongue – if they have brown or black skin, this may be easier to see on the palms of your hands or soles of their feet
- they may also have a rash that's swollen, raised or itchy in addition to those mentioned above

Cards are designed to be used in a scenarios including:

- Where a teacher or adult is alone in a classroom when a student becomes unwell
- Where two adults are with a student who is unwell but requires CPR and it doesn't feel possible for either adult to leave
- Where students are alone and one of their peers becomes unwell

In all these situations, one of the cards can be taken and handed to the first adult a student sees. It is that adult's responsibility to take action and to carry out the instructions on the card – receipt of the card in an emergency gives permission to the recipient to follow steps without additional authorisation.

The second card should remain in the room, as it contains lifesaving information about what the person with the student experiencing a severe allergic reaction should do, giving a practical step-by-step reminder on what action to take. It is recommended that all adults familiarise themselves with the school's procedure for summoning emergency help, that they understand the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis, and that they know to follow the instructions printed on the side of an Adrenaline Auto Injector (AAI) pen.

If in doubt, administer an AAI. Autoinjectors contain adrenaline, a natural substance which the body makes and is triggered in emergency situations. Adrenaline cannot hurt anyone, and a student will just be monitored in hospital if the medication wasn't necessary. If an AAI is not given when necessary, there could be a fatality and the student could die.

Preparation for use:

- Cards should be readily available throughout the school or setting
- There should be two identical cards in each location
- Staff should know where to find them, a consistent location in each room is recommended; for example, by the exit(s) or on top of a door frame
- Each card should have the name of its specific location; for example; 'science block Sc3', 'Class One', 'playground'
- if there is a system of internal phones instructions for getting an outside line should be included; for example an additional '9'
- First aiders should have these within their first aid kit

- Consideration should be given to putting these into the student's allergy kit, along with their allergy management plan, which is kept wherever they are. The child's name would be on the card instead of the room.
- Ensure that school policies allow for personal mobile phones to be used in an emergency situation
- Ensure that information about who has first aid/AAI (adrenaline pen/EpiPen/Jext Pen) and training is displayed around school
- Ensure that cover staff understand this emergency procedure as part of their welcome and understand they are permitted to follow the instructions in an emergency without further authority being given

Using the cards:

Member of staff first in attendance:

- Lies the student down with legs raised and creates privacy
- Provides reassurance as they assess the situation and keeps talking to explain to student that AAI is going to be administered
- Administer AAI and note time and symptoms. If you're not confident in administering an AAI or there's no AAI available, call 999 straight away
- Grabs the cards; calls for help from where they are, and sends the nearest person (adult or student) to the first adult that they see, with one of the cards
- If they have difficulty breathing and have an inhaler -administer this now
- If they are alone, they should not leave the child but should shout for help from where they are. Once help arrives, they should be given the second card so they can carry out the actions (or swap with the first adult if they have been giving CPR for a period of time)

- A good response should happen quickly, if not, administer 2nd AAI after 5 mins
- Keep talking and reassuring
- NEVER leave the student, as they could deteriorate very rapidly, do not allow them to sit up or stand until help arrives, do not attempt to take the student to hospital in your own car
- All students that have been given adrenaline will need to go to hospital to be monitored

Member of staff receiving the card:

- Follows the instructions on the card. Takes personal ownership for carrying out all instructions, even if you are not a member of SLT or teaching staff. Do not waste time in trying to find a designated lead or checking it is your responsibility
- You should call 999, ideally using your mobile phone. If there is a 'no mobile phone' policy, this is overridden by receiving this card and you will be protected to use it
- Call 999 and ensure that First aider, Office and senior leadership team are alerted immediately. Do not worry that you may be making a duplicate 999 call, it is safer for there to be too many calls than none at all, and every second counts

Office/senior leadership team:

- Implement emergency procedures protocol

Post-Allergy Emergency

- Debrief all staff and learners involved or who witnessed the emergency
- Review emergency procedures
- Arrange to meet with student's family to review care
- Record the incident using the school's system for recording allergic reactions