



2016-2017

Dear Families,

We would like to bring to your attention a growing health concern. More and more children are being diagnosed with life-threatening food allergies. Although the risk to students with these allergies cannot be completely eliminated, it can be greatly reduced. Protecting students with life-threatening food allergies is the shared responsibility of the family, the school and the community.

General Information about Life-Threatening Food Allergies

Over 90 percent of life-threatening allergic reactions are caused by the following eight foods: peanut, tree nut (walnut, cashew, pecan, hazelnut, almond, etc.), milk, egg, fish, shellfish, soy, and wheat, with peanut and tree nut allergies ranking number one. Studies of children show that most reactions happen from accidental ingestion. However, it is possible for a student to react to tactile exposure or, in rare cases, inhalation exposure. Students with **severe** food allergies are at risk for anaphylaxis, which is **LIFE- THREATENING** and requires immediate emergency treatment.

General Guidelines

All classrooms at St. James are Peanut Free zones, therefore, we have developed a Food List to be used for all snacks and celebratory treats.

- Review the Food Allergy Guidelines which can be found on the website under Health Office.
- Strict adherence to the St. James Food List is enforced. The Food List is on the website.
- We encourage the use of non-food items (pencils, stickers, holy cards, etc.) as celebratory treats instead of food.
- Teach your children not to share any food or utensils in the classroom and lunchroom.
- **Teach your children the practice of proper hand washing before and after eating.** It is important for the safety of our students with severe food allergies and it decreases the spread of germs.
- **PLEASE.....pack 2 “Wet Ones”/baby wipes in your child’s lunchbox (use one before eating and one after eating!)**
- Teach your children to accept that all children are different and some cannot eat certain foods.

Our ultimate goal is to ensure the health and safety of all our students. We must remember that an All-Allergen Free environment is impossible to achieve, and to expect it is to harbor a false sense of security. But with everyone’s cooperation, we can work towards achieving our goal of keeping ALL of our children as safe. We wish to express our sincere appreciation for your support and understanding.

The St. James Health Office