

# New Regulations for Care of Students in School

A new state regulation became effective on May 1, 2004. This regulation requires that our school (or early childhood education program) be prepared to implement an emergency treatment plan, called a protocol, anytime a student or staff member experiences a **life threatening** asthma attack or systemic allergic reaction (anaphylaxis).

The protocol requires that 911 is called first. After that call is made, an EpiPen injection will be given and then albuterol is provided through a nebulizer. An EpiPen is a small pre-filled, automatic injection device that resembles a highlighter. It is used to deliver epinephrine. Epinephrine is a medication that is used to bring quick relief by improving breathing and lung function. Albuterol is another medication that is used to bring breathing relief (commonly found in metered-dose inhalers). The nebulizer is a machine that mixes the albuterol with air to provide a fine mist (aerosol) for breathing in through a mask or mouthpiece.

The protocol steps are designed to provide quick, effective care in order to prevent death from occurring due to a severe asthma attack or anaphylaxis. Staff members have been trained to recognize signs and symptoms of a life-threatening “breathing” emergency and to properly administer the medications. The protocol is a standing medical order that has been signed by Dr. Michael Hattan. If, for whatever reason, you do not want your student to receive the life-saving emergency treatment under the protocol, you must file your written objection with the school.

If you know that your student has asthma or a known allergy, it is **critically important** that you communicate this information to our school staff. You may contact your school nurse or health clerk to notify us of any of these conditions. For each student with a known allergic condition or asthma, you must provide the school with (1) written documentation, (2) instructions, and (3) medications as directed by a physician.

This protocol does NOT mean your child with asthma or a severe known allergy no longer needs to provide your own life sustaining medicine to school! (for example – an inhaler for an asthma student or an epi-pen for a student with a bee sting allergy). In the event that your student experiences a life threatening asthma attack or systemic allergic reaction, we will defer to the specific documents and medication that you have provided.

If you have questions or concerns about the protocol or your student’s health issues, please contact our school nurse, Judi Neswick RN BSN, at either 494-2433 or 494-3061.

Prepared by Kristin Petersen, Legal Counsel, Nebraska Department of Education