

Information to Help Promote Dolan as a Nut Free School Environment:

Food allergy is an exaggerated response by the immune system to a food that the body mistakenly identifies as being harmful. Once the immune system decides that a particular food is harmful, it produces specific antibodies to that particular food. The next time the individual eats that food, the immune system releases moderate to massive amounts of chemicals, including histamine, to protect the body. These chemicals trigger a cascade of allergic symptoms that can affect the respiratory system, gastrointestinal tract, skin and cardiovascular system.

Peanut and tree nuts typically cause the most severe allergic reactions and approximately 90 percent of fatal and near-fatal reactions are due to these foods. Allergies to peanut, tree nuts, fish and shellfish are often considered lifelong. The federal law is that all foods that are prepared commercially must be "**Labeled for Food Allergens**", so look at the ingredients.

Ingestion of the food allergen is the principal route of exposure that leads to allergic reactions. Ingestion of even very small amounts of foods can, in certain instances, result in fatal reactions without rapid intervention. While it is also possible for a child to have an allergic reaction to tactile (touch) exposure or inhalation (breathing in) exposure, research has shown that they are extremely unlikely to result in severe or life-threatening reactions. Nevertheless, if children with life-threatening food allergies touch the allergens and then put their fingers to their eyes, nose or mouth, the exposure becomes an ingestion and may cause anaphylaxis. The quantity of food necessary to trigger an allergic reaction may depend upon multiple variables. Each individual's level of sensitivity may change over time.

Every food allergy reaction has potential of developing into a life threatening event. All children have a right to learn in a safe environment. Our goal of making **Dolan: A NUT FREE** environment is to reduce the risk of accidental exposure.



Although the nut free protocol may be difficult for a child who is not allergic, it does present an opportunity to teach all children about understanding and cooperation in meeting the needs of peers. A food allergy fact sheet is available at:

<http://www.foodallergy.org/>.

SBHC UPDATE:

Your School Based Health Center is ready to help make the second half of the school year as happy and healthy as possible. We are available to work with you and your child to address medical, emotional, or behavioral needs. Please stop by (**we are located across from the gym**) or call to make an appointment or referral (203-977-4698).

Services are available to all students with permission form signed by parent or guardian.