

Article 1: Student's Death Spotlights Food Allergies in Schools

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/students-death-spotlights-food-allergies-in-school/>

(CBS) The death of a 7-year-old girl at school from a peanut allergy has raised questions about a school's responsibility in treating kids with food allergies.

Two days ago, Ammaria Johnson died after suffering an allergic reaction at Hopkins Elementary School in Chesterfield County, Va., WTVR CBS 6 in Richmond reported. The death is still being investigated, but Johnson's mother told WTVR she learned from the school principal and a doctor that the allergy was to a peanut product.

Emergency crews were called to the school on Monday, but by the time they arrived, the child was in cardiac arrest, according to a Chesterfield Fire Department spokesman Lt. Jason Elmore. Johnson was pronounced dead a short time later at CJW Medical Center in Richmond.

Food allergies affect an estimated 6 to 8 percent of children under age 5, and about 3 to 4 percent of adults, according to the Mayo Clinic. Food allergies can cause a number of symptoms, ranging from digestive problems and hives to a life-threatening reaction called anaphylaxis.

How did the school respond? County school and health officials could not discuss Johnson's death directly, although they said it is the responsibility of the parent to provide medicine and instructions to doctors for kids with allergies.

"For any medication, the school would have to be in possession of that medication to provide it," Shawn Smith, a spokesman for Chesterfield County Public Schools, told ABC News. "The medication we receive, or should receive, has to be specific to that child, whether it's over-the-counter or prescription."

The girl's mom, Laura Pendleton, told WTVR she authorized an allergy action plan to give her daughter Benadryl in case of an allergic reaction, but the school didn't give the girl the medication. Pendleton said she had tried to give an aid an EpiPen for emergencies, but was told to keep it at home. An EpiPen is available with prescription and gives a dose of epinephrine that reverses symptoms of an allergic reaction for enough time to get the person to a hospital.

The girl's tragic case raises the question: Should schools stockpile EpiPens to treat kids in the event of an allergic reaction?

Maria Acebal, head of the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network, told CNN that Ammaria's death "underscores the need for all teachers to have the basics of food allergy safety as part of their orientation and continuing education."

Acebal told ABC she's supporting a bill that would let all schools give EpiPens to any

student, regardless of if they have a prescription.

"No one in this country has ever been sued for giving epinephrine, to my knowledge," Acebal told ABC. "All the lawsuits come about because school officials don't give it when it's needed."

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Article 2: Boy Survives Delayed Reaction To Peanut Allergy

Allergic Child Unknowingly Took Bite Of Classroom Treat

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OMAHA, Neb. – A Carter Lake, Iowa 7-year-old survived a brush with death after a eating a snack that caused a delayed peanut-allergy reaction.

"I was allergic to peanut butter. My tummy hurted, so we went to the hospital," said 7-year-old Max Roseland as he took a break from reading books to his sister, Ruby.

The boy has a known peanut and gluten allergy as well as asthma. Just before Christmas, his mother went to his school to approve the snacks that were going to be served as part of a special movie day.

Just hours later, Amy received a startling phone call from the school.

"I'd gotten a phone call that he'd taken a bite of a peanut butter granola bar," said Amy Roseland, Max's mother.

Roseland said the peanut butter bar was not on the approved list of snacks in her son's peanut-free classroom. The snack somehow made its way out of another child's lunch box and onto Max's plate. In the darkness of the classroom movie party, the boy took a tiny bite.

Max said he knew there was trouble when after just a penny-sized bite, his tongue started itching. His mother picked him up and took him directly to Children's Hospital and Medical Center. The boy complained of a stomachache but was talking and breathing comfortably.

After 30 minutes in the emergency room, the child broke out in hives and his throat was tightening.

"It happened so fast. It was a nightmare," said Amy.

"I saw him in the ER. When I first walked in, his lungs had failed and they were beginning CPR," said Dr. Rob Chaplin, a critical care specialist at Children's. Dr. Chaplin said typically when a person with a peanut allergy has a reaction, it happens immediately. He said a delayed reaction is extremely rare. According to the Centers for Disease Control, four out of every 100 children have a food allergy. Data from the National Institutes of Health shows more than 3 million Americans are allergic to peanuts, tree nuts, or both.

"A constellation of symptoms happen. You get sweaty. All the vessels in your body dilate. Your lungs can shut down. Your airway can shut down," Chaplin said.

Doctors rushed Max to intensive care where they continued CPR and administered a host

of drugs to help Max breathe. His heart rate dropped extremely low.

"They came back and said things were not going well in there. Everything was going south so bad," said Max's dad, Chris Roseland.

As a last resort, doctors put Max on a heart-lung bypass machine called ECMO. They connected the machine so it would simply take over for the boy's failing lungs by adding oxygen to his blood and removing carbon dioxide. A ventilator kept his lungs physically moving.

Using the machine carries significant risk of bleeding because of the anti-clotting drugs that must be administered.

This is the first time Children's Hospital and Medical Center has used the ECMO machine for a peanut allergy case. It's typically used in the cardiac unit with both the heart and lung functions keeping a child alive. Children's is also only one of a handful of medical centers in the country which can use the machine this way. "They're amazing. We were in the right place at the right time with the right people," said Amy.

Chaplin said 12 hours later, after the peanuts cleared from the boy's system, doctors removed all tubes and breathing devices and Max was happy and healthy again.

"When we went in, it was for a tummy ache. And the next thing, he's on life support," said Amy.

Dr. Chaplin took a special interest in Max's case because he is also the parent of a child with a peanut allergy. Chaplin's goal is to pull together a panel of doctors, parents and experts in the community to devise a more uniform plan for dealing with peanut products at home and in school.

Article 3: Amid Protest, Florida School Stands Behind Tough New Peanut Allergy Regulations

By Mary Quinn O'Connor

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Despite protests by angry parents, a school in Florida is standing behind its decision to implement new regulations to protect a first grade student suffering from a severe peanut allergy.

Students at Edgewater Elementary are required to wash their hands and rinse their mouths out before entering the classroom each morning and after lunch. Teachers, who monitor the daily rinsing, must also ensure that desks are being continually wiped down with Clorox wipes. The school has banned all peanut products, eliminated snacks in the classroom and prevented outside food at holiday parties. And last week a peanut-sniffing dog was brought into the school.

District spokeswoman Nancy Wait of Volusia County Schools said the school is legally obligated to take these safety precautions because of the Federal Disabilities Act.

“It would be the same thing as putting a handicap ramp for a student that is physically disabled. The only difference with this is that it affects other students,” she told FoxNews.com.

But some parents are saying it is taking away from their children’s learning time.

“On average, it’s probably taking a good 30 minutes out of the day. That’s my child’s education. Thirty minutes could be a while subject,” Carrie Starkey told FoxNews.com.

On Thursday she and other parents protested outside the school, picketing with signs that said, “Our Kids Have Rights Too.”

Experts say the school may have gone too far and that there are easier ways to protect the child.

“I have never seen anything like this,” said allergist Dr. Scott Sicherer with the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network or FAAN, an organization that monitors national food allergy issues. “There are many guidelines on how to manage food allergies in schools... things like no food sharing. There are plenty of relatively simple things the school could put in place that aren’t burdensome,” said Sicherer.

But David Bailey, the father of girl with life threatening food allergy, says that if his daughter even smells peanuts, her reaction could be fatal. "We've fought very hard to put certain things in place... to keep her alive... in school," he told MyFoxOrlando. "She's already a cast-out. She can't do things that most kids can do."

While the school's actions may seem drastic and invasive the school says it must protect the health of the student.

"It may seem like an inconvenience but this student registered her disability at the beginning of the school year and we have to do these things to give her a safe learning environment," said Wait. Since the protest was held last week, parents will be looking for some sort of compromise from the school administration.

"We understand that they need to protect this girl, but these measures are just extreme. Procedures need to be set in place, but not procedures that will take away from our children's education," said Starkey.