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Food Allergy in Youth

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Food Allergy in Youth

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Re: FOOD ALLERGY IN YOUTH


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Dr. Cheryl J. Hill, PT, DPT, PhD, Editor-in-Chief
Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice
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Dear Dr. Hill,

In the article titled "Food Allergy in Youth: A Primer for Allied Health Professionals," published in the October 2018 (volume 16 | number 4) edition of the Internet Journal of Allied Health Sciences and Practice by Welch, Maziarz, McCartney, and Raker reviewed the background, physical, social, and psychological burdens of food allergy in youth. The focus of this article was to enlighten allied health care professionals about food allergy awareness, prevention, and treatment in order to help adolescents remain safe.

As a parent of a food-allergic-child, and as a Registered Nurse, I applaud you for this article. I appreciate the article's explanation of food allergies, their management, cause, and triggers as well as explanation for the need of prompt anaphylactic (life saving) treatment via an epinephrine auto-injector.

That said, the discussion about disease management of a food-allergic child is incomplete without discussing the role of the school nurse. The school nurse is an integral part and primary resource for keeping a food allergic child safe,¹ providing training to school staff on awareness of food-allergy reaction symptoms and allergen-contamination prevention. The school nurse can assist in the coordination of allergen-free safe spaces in classrooms, locker rooms, and other locations where allied health professions engage children at school. In addition, if a physical or an occupational therapist or other members of an allied health field had a question about the child's medical care, the school nurse would be the first point of contact.²

Besides providing nursing care, a school nurse can also function as a care coordinator and an advocate for allergen-free spaces at school. The nurse is also actively involved and leading the way in the creation of individualized care plans and staff training.

This article mentions that successful food allergy management is a team effort; with that, I completely agree. In that spirit of collaboration, let us make sure that the school nurse is recognized and included in every discussion related to the health and well-being of school aged children. This is not asking too much when one considers the importance of

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the school nurse's role in keeping the child safe by means of a well coordinated plan of care for any given day, as long as that child is present on the school's campus.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Abrahams
RN-BSN Student,
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References

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