



POSTER PRESENTATION

Open Access

Are teachers knowledgeable and confident about dealing with allergy emergencies?

W Watson^{1,2*}, AM Woodrow², A Bruce³, A Power³

From Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology Annual Scientific Meeting 2009
Halifax, Canada. 22-25 October 2009

Introduction

There is little information on teachers' perspectives on assessment and management of allergy emergencies at school.

Method

An electronic survey was sent to school boards for distribution to all schools.

Results

724 teachers (8%) completed the survey. 48% had at least one student under their direct supervision with a severe allergy. 28% believed that all students with severe allergies had a management plan for treatment. 18% never reviewed this plan. More than 80% were confident in recognizing and knowing what to do for a severe reaction, and in using an epinephrine auto-injector. Teachers learned auto-injector technique from public/community health professionals (63%), parents (19%), or were self-taught (7%). 12% had no instruction. Children carried the auto-injector in 50% of cases. 11% reported that auto-injectors were locked in the principal's office and 21% were uncertain of its location. 91% identified common causes of anaphylaxis. More than 70% would administer the auto-injector with symptoms such as difficulty swallowing, looking blue, loss of consciousness, tongue swelling or shortness of breath after possible ingestion; less than 53% would administer the auto-injector for generalized itching, generalized hives, or feeling faint. 24% would administer the auto-injector without symptoms. 59% identified the appropriate level of activity after auto-injector use. To reduce risk of an allergic reaction, 80% thought that instructing the child not to share food, 69% thought that washing hands with soap and water after eating, and 66% thought that a

total ban of peanut-containing food would be effective. 25% incorrectly thought that using a hand sanitizer would reduce risk.

Hypothesis

Development of standardized training/protocols for all schools may increase teachers' knowledge and confidence in managing allergy emergencies.

Author details

¹Department of Pediatrics, Dalhousie University; Canada . ²IWK Health Centre, Canada . ³Nova Scotia Department of Education, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Published: 12 May 2010

doi:10.1186/1710-1492-6-S1-P10

Cite this article as: Watson et al.: Are teachers knowledgeable and confident about dealing with allergy emergencies?. *Allergy, Asthma & Clinical Immunology* 2010 **6**(Suppl 1):P10.

Submit your next manuscript to BioMed Central and take full advantage of:

- Convenient online submission
- Thorough peer review
- No space constraints or color figure charges
- Immediate publication on acceptance
- Inclusion in PubMed, CAS, Scopus and Google Scholar
- Research which is freely available for redistribution

Submit your manuscript at
www.biomedcentral.com/submit



¹Department of Pediatrics, Dalhousie University; Canada