

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

We have several children at St Thomas with food allergies. Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction, and is potentially life-threatening.

You can help by ensuring that you do not send nut based foods to school and remind your children of the importance of not sharing their food with other students.

Please remind grandparents, nannies and others who pick up your children not to bring nut based snacks onto the school grounds.

We thank you for your cooperation.



Every May, FARE hosts a nationwide Food Allergy Awareness Week to shine a spotlight on the seriousness of food allergies and to improve public understanding of this potentially life-threatening medical condition. By increasing awareness, we can encourage respect, promote safety, and improve the quality of life of all those affected by food allergies and anaphylaxis. Here are some facts you may not know about food allergies:

- ✦ Food allergies can be life-threatening and are a serious and growing public health problem.
- ✦ They affect up to 15 million Americans, including nearly 6 million children – roughly two in every classroom.
- ✦ Nearly 40 percent of these children have already experienced a severe or life-threatening reaction. In addition, more than 30 percent of these children have multiple food allergies.
- ✦ The prevalence of childhood food allergies among U.S. children increased 50 percent between 1997 and 2011, but there is no clear answer as to why.
- ✦ A reaction to food can range from a mild response (such as an itchy mouth) to anaphylaxis, a severe and potentially deadly reaction. Every three minutes, a food allergy reaction sends someone to the emergency room in the U.S.
- ✦ About a third of kids with food allergies report that they have been bullied specifically because of their allergies.

There are many ways you can make a difference in the lives of those living with food allergies:

- ✦ Learn more about food allergies and anaphylaxis by going to [www.foodallergy.org](http://www.foodallergy.org)
- ✦ Support friends and loved ones with food allergies by asking how you can help!