

Massachusetts: Case Study and Data on the Use of Epinephrine in the School Setting

- Massachusetts encourages schools to stock generally available epinephrine on site. In November 2003, reporting of epinephrine administration in all public and nonpublic schools became mandatory.
- During the 2004 – 2005 school year, 68 school districts and one vocational-technical school reported 132 in school administrations of epinephrine for the treatment of allergic reactions.
- ***In 19% of the cases, the student was not known to have an allergic condition at the time of the anaphylactic event.***
- While most school districts reported only one administration of epinephrine, 27 school districts reported more than one and six school districts reported five or more epinephrine administrations during the school year.
- Twelve of the administrations were to adult staff members; the remaining 120 were administered to students ranging in age from 3 – 18 years
- The most frequently reported allergens were tree nuts and peanuts
- Thirty-one percent of the individuals receiving epinephrine reported having multiple allergies. Among these individuals, several different combinations of allergens were reported, including allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, dairy, egg, fish/shellfish, soy, sesame seeds, chocolate, certain fruits and vegetables, latex, insect venom, and others
- The average time between development of symptoms and the administration of epinephrine for all individuals (with both known and unknown allergic conditions) was 11 minutes, with a range of 0 – 90 minutes.
- The average age of students with unknown allergic conditions was 13 years, with a range of 6 – 18 years.
- The average amount of time between onset of symptoms and administrations of epinephrine in those individuals with no known allergies was 12 minutes, with a range of 2 – 60 minutes (compared to an average response time of 11 minutes, with a range of 0-90 minutes for individuals with known allergies).

Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health