

Carnegie Mellon

Equal Opportunity Services • Whitfield Hall, 143 N. Craig Street, Pittsburgh PA 15213

Peanut Allergy Fact Sheet

This sheet is intended to assist you in helping the students. The information is generic in nature and not specific to this student. For information about individualized accommodations for a specific student, please consult with the student, contact Health Services or Larry Powell in the Equal Opportunity Services office. (See contact information below)

Definition:

Peanut allergy affects approximately 1.5 million people in the United States. **It is the most common cause of life-threatening allergic reactions (anaphylaxis), accounting for 80 percent of fatal or near-fatal incidents each year.** An allergy to peanuts involves an immune system response.

Ingestion, inhalation, or contact with peanuts, peanut residue or any products made from peanuts (examples include peanut M&M's, potato chips made with peanut oil, or sometimes even Chinese food), may trigger a severe reaction.

Associated Difficulties:

The most serious and potentially deadly allergic reaction to peanuts is an anaphylactic response. If you are highly sensitive, an anaphylactic reaction can develop immediately after peanut exposure, causing the airways (bronchi) to constrict, making breathing difficult. Blood pressure may drop to life-threateningly low levels, making you feel dizzy or lose consciousness. Other serious signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction include:

- Wheezing
- Rapid or weak pulse
- Blueness of your skin, including your lips and nail beds
- Diarrhea
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dizziness
- Loss of consciousness

Best Practice:

Provide an environment that is free of peanuts and peanut products. Encourage individuals who have recently eaten peanuts or peanut products to avoid physical contact with the allergic person and to wash their hands if possible.

What To Do:

Someone should remain with the person who is having the reaction and someone should call for help immediately.

If a reaction occurs on campus, call Campus Police at x82323 and tell them that someone is having an anaphylactic reaction, you need a 911 response team and tell the dispatcher your location.

If the person with the peanut allergy has an EpiPen (an injection containing epinephrine) on their person, provide assistance so that they can self-administer the medication as soon as possible.

Larry Powell Carnegie Mellon University Whitfield Hall 143 North Craig Street Pittsburgh, PA 15213 Whitfield Hall Room 102
lpowell@andrew.cmu.edu <http://hr.web.cmu.edu/eos.html> Phone/TTY (412) 268-2013 Fax (412) 268-2853

Student Health Services Carnegie Mellon, 1060 Morewood Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 (Morewood Gardens E Tower, First Floor, Rm 144 -- entrance faces Forbes Avenue)

health@andrew.cmu.edu Phone: (412)268-2157 Fax: (412)268-6357

Sources: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/peanut-allergy/> Carnegie Mellon University Health Services/ Carnegie Mellon University Students

This document can be produced in an alternative format. Call 412/268-2012