



# Phoenix Gymnastics Academy

## Allergy Policy

### Introduction

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction at the extreme end of the allergic spectrum, affecting the entire body, and can occur within minutes of exposure. The main causes are attributed to nuts, seeds and seafood. This policy focuses on the management of nut allergies.

One approach could be to ban nuts from Phoenix Gymnastics Academy (the Club) however, the Anaphylaxis Campaign highlights several problems with this approach as follows:

- It would be impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that the club is nut free, given that pupils regularly bring in food from home.
- There would be a risk that children with allergies might be led into a false sense of security.
- The nut ban would be seen as a precedent for demands to ban other potentially 'risky' foods.
- Nuts are a great source of protein, fibre and essential fats which are essential for growing children and some of our gymnasts are perhaps vegetarian, have other food allergies which means nuts are essential and a very good source of nutrition for them especially when doing exercise.

### Policy

1. We do not claim to be a 'nut-free' Club. The Anaphylaxis Campaign advises that this is a pragmatic approach, for the following reasons:

It would be impossible to provide an absolute guarantee that the club is nut free. Gymnasts regularly bring in food from home and food bought on the way to the club. There would be a risk that children with allergies might be led into a false sense of security.

There is a strong case to be argued that children with food allergies will develop a better awareness and understanding of how to manage their allergies if they grow up in an environment where allergens may be present but, as at Phoenix Gymnastics Academy, are restricted and monitored, as much as is reasonably possible.

Within the club, we take precautions to minimise the risk of anaphylaxis and other allergenic reactions occurring:

- We sell any nut products that are not prepacked and sealed.  
Gymnasts who are known to have food allergies (e.g. nuts, egg, milk, gluten, fish, molluscs, crustaceans) in holiday camps where food will be eaten are monitored carefully during meal times and the Cafe providing the food informed of the allergy.
- At snack times children are required to wash their hands before and after their session.

2. The only food we directly provide is items stocked as part of our health tuck shop and all items are packaged with full allergy advice on the back of the packets as per UK standards.

Whilst most allergic reactions are the result of food ingestion, we recognise, too, that severe allergic reactions can occur as a result of individuals being susceptible to airborne allergens. Allergic reactions can also be triggered by touching surfaces – such as the reception desk or chairs which may have been inadvertently contaminated.

The success of minimising anaphylaxis risk – and all other allergenic reactions - requires the co-operation of pupils, staff and parents. Staff and gymnasts are reminded to wash hands after being in contact with any food to minimise the likelihood of allergens being present on surfaces.



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It is essential that the club has full details of all our pupils' allergies. It is the responsibility of the parent to fully inform staff members of any allergy's gymnasts may have.

Within the parameters of confidentiality, the club provides – to the cafe and other relevant parties – a list of names of gymnasts with severe medical conditions including severe allergies.

Whilst the club will exercise all due care and attention to minimise risk, gymnasts are expected to self-manage their allergy, too, having an understanding of.

- Foods which are safe or unsafe
- Their specific symptoms, if an allergic reaction occurs
- Their responsibility to carry their EpiPen with them at all times.
- Who to advise, when an allergic reaction happens.
- Letting friends and staff know about their allergy, in case of emergency.
- When to seek guidance (and from whom) – if in doubt

3. We are committed to the safety of our members and visitors, to events held at Phoenix Gymnastics Academy.

Phoenix Gymnastics Academy uses Indulge to provide food at our events such as camps and parties. Phoenix Gymnastics Academy has no control over the food supplied at any of its events. Phoenix Gymnastics Academy liaises with Indulge and passes on any allergy requirements provided to us, however both Phoenix Gymnastics Academy and Indulge are not allergy free zones and therefore cannot guarantee the safety of any food provided or consumed at our events for those with allergies. We suggest gymnasts and party participants with allergies bring a packed lunch with food that is safe for them to consume.

### 4. Anaphylaxis Protocol

How do I recognise an anaphylaxis reaction and what action should I take?

Early symptoms include:

Itchy, urticarial rash anywhere on the body  
Runny nose and watery eyes  
Nausea and vomiting  
Dizziness.

Danger signs include:

Swelling of the lips, tongue and throat  
Cough, wheeze, tightness of chest or shortness of breath  
Collapse or unconsciousness

Treatment will depend on the severity of the reaction.

For mild symptoms Piriton or inhaler may be given by a first aider or by any adult coach. The agreed health plan will be on their registration form.

For severe symptoms (see emergency procedure, below) an EpiPen device should be used. This should be administered into the thigh muscle (can be delivered through clothing) and will allow the adrenaline to quickly reverse the effects of the allergic reaction. The child should then be taken to hospital.



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### Emergency procedure

The following procedure must be adopted.

- Call an ambulance and send a responsible person to fetch the child's emergency box
- Call for the person in charge of the session.
- Monitor the child's condition carefully.
- Administer the EpiPen
  
- Remove packaging and pull off the blue safety cap from the EpiPen.
- Hold the device with about 10 cm from the outer thigh.
- Inject – swing and jab the orange tip firmly against the outer thigh and listen for an audible click from the mechanism – hold in place for 10 seconds.
  
- The orange tip extends on removal.
- Massage the area for 10 seconds.
- Monitor the child's progress – a second dose of EpiPen may be required after 10 minutes, if the condition has not improved and help has still not arrived.
  
- When the ambulance crew arrives, ascertain where they will be taking the child and give all used EpiPens to the ambulance crew for safe disposal.
- Contact the child's parents, guardian or next of kin and advise them to meet at the hospital, if they are not in the immediate vicinity.
- Accompany the child to hospital if the parents have not arrived.