



**YMCA of Owen Sound  
Grey Bruce**

YMCA Health, Fitness & Aquatics Facility

# Anaphylaxis Policy

Effective Date: May 1, 2017

*Building healthy  
communities*

**INTENT:**

1. To provide procedures for the management of Anaphylaxis due to **nuts**, as defined below, in our YMCA Health, Fitness & Aquatics facility (YMCA HFA) and off-site program locations in order to comply with the Policy on Ableism and Discrimination (“Policy on Ableism”) which recognizes Anaphylaxis as a disability under the *Human Rights Code*, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19 (“Code”) and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, R.S.C., 1985, c. H-6.
2. The Policy on Ableism recognizes a legal responsibility for service providers to accommodate people with potentially life threatening allergies, as they would any other person with a disability, to the point of undue hardship. This requires responsible parties to maintain accessible, inclusive, discrimination and harassment-free environments that respect human rights.
3. The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce has committed to take actions to educate the general public about Anaphylaxis and make members and public aware of the City’s policy to not sell Nuts or Nut Products in the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre and not to bring Nuts or Nut Products into this facility.
4. The City of Owen Sound has instated an Anaphylaxis Policy (in effect as of May 1, 2017) in the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre; which includes the YMCA HFA. As such, we are obligated to comply with the City’s policy. It is also in the best interest of our members and the public for us to do so.
5. This YMCA HFA Anaphylaxis Policy (“Policy”) addresses one of the most common allergens: **Nuts**.
6. This YMCA HFA Policy addresses the highest risk user group: Children participating in YMCA programs who are under the age of 14 years.

**SCOPE:**

This Policy applies to the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce YMCA Health, Fitness and Aquatics facility (YMCA HFA) located in the Julie McArthur Regional Recreation Centre, and the off-site program locations related to YMCA HFA. This Policy applies both to programs administered by the YMCA and Third Parties. Users of this facility must comply with this Policy.

**DEFINITIONS:**

For the purposes of this policy;

**Anaphylaxis:** is a severe systemic allergic reaction which can be fatal, resulting in circulatory collapse or shock.

**Anaphylactic Reaction:** signs and symptoms of Anaphylaxis can occur within minutes of exposure to an allergen. In rarer cases, the time frame can vary up to several hours after exposure. The ways symptoms appear can vary from person to person and from episode to episode in the same person.

**Symptoms of Anaphylaxis:** generally include two or more of the following body systems: skin, respiratory, gastrointestinal and/or cardiovascular. However, low blood pressure alone, in the absence of other symptoms, can also represent Anaphylaxis.

- Skin – hives, swelling (face, lips, tongue), itching, warmth, redness;
- Respiratory (breathing) – coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath, chest pain or tightness, throat tightness, hoarse voice, nasal congestion or hay fever-like symptoms (runny, itchy nose and watery eyes, sneezing), trouble swallowing;
- Gastrointestinal (stomach) – nausea, pain or cramps, vomiting, diarrhea;



## ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

- Cardiovascular (heart) – paler than normal skin colour/blue colour, weak pulse, passing out, dizziness or light-headedness, shock;
- Other – anxiety, sense of doom (the feeling that something bad is about to happen), headache, uterine cramps, metallic taste.

**Epinephrine:** is the synthetic form of the hormone adrenaline that is used as the treatment or drug of choice to treat Anaphylaxis and life-threatening asthma attacks. This treatment is life-saving.

**Epinephrine Auto-Injector:** a medical device that is used to deliver a pre-measured dose (or doses) of Epinephrine. Also known as an “epi-pen”.

**Food Services:** includes making, transporting or selling food products. This includes services such as catering, concession stands, bistros, restaurants and vending machines. This list is non-exhaustive.

**Third Parties:** includes those individuals, businesses and organizations that have entered into an agreement/contract with the YMCA to provide programs/services, rent/lease space, or otherwise carry on business in the facility.

**Nuts:** means as stated by Health Canada the priority nuts of concern are peanuts and tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachio nuts and walnuts).

### PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

#### Reducing the Risk of Exposure

1. All reasonable efforts will be made to control the environment at the YMCA HFA in order to minimize the exposure to Nuts. This must be a collaborative process which involves parents/guardians, YMCA and City staff, facility users, community members, and Third Parties.
2. While the YMCA HFA shall take all reasonable efforts to accommodate children with Anaphylaxis due to Nut allergies, there is no legal responsibility to reduce the risk of exposure to zero. Despite best efforts, the YMCA HFA cannot guarantee a 100 percent Nut-free environment.

#### Communication Strategy – Education and Awareness

In YMCA HFA registered programs provided to children under 14 years of age in which the parents/guardians have advised the YMCA HFA staff that their child has a potentially life threatening allergy (anaphylaxis) to Nuts, the YMCA HFA staff responsible for the direct provision of the program will discuss allergen awareness with children, encourage children not to share lunches or trade snacks, monitor those children who have known allergies while eating, and reinforce the importance of proper hygiene and effective hand-washing. If these programs are administered by Third Parties, who are required to comply with the YMCA’s HFA policies, the YMCA HFA shall make the Third Parties aware of this Policy and the requirement for education and awareness. Pamphlets indicating that the City of Owen Sound’s Recreation Facilities (including the YMCA HFA facility) are nut-aware shall be made available to all registrants when enrolling in programs and to community members in general by way of posting this Policy on the YMCA’s website.

#### Communication Strategy – Signs and Notices

1. The City of Owen Sound shall ensure that signs/notices are posted in the City’s Recreation Facilities that these Recreation Facilities are “Nut-Aware”. Additionally, as the City cannot guarantee that food products

that are sold within these Recreation Facilities have not come into contact with Nuts, or that every member of the community respects this Policy, the City shall post signs/notices which indicate that certain products “may have come into contact with nuts or nut products”.

2. The City is responsible for implementing a strategy to ensure that signs/notices are consistently in place. Where a sign is damaged or removed, the City shall have staff post a new sign or notice.
3. The YMCA HFA will provide notices directly to parents/guardians when registering children for programs offered at the YMCA that this facility is “Nut-Aware”. This will be in the form of the City’s pamphlet and/or a note on each registrant’s electronic or printed registration confirmation form with a link to the City’s pamphlet.
4. The YMCA HFA will periodically include information in member newsletters and post signs in the HFA facility and program sites that the YMCA HFA facility is “Nut-Aware”.

### **Parents/Guardians Responsibilities**

1. All parents/guardians with children who are known to be at risk of anaphylaxis and are *registering for programs* are required to notify the YMCA HFA facility at the time of program registration of their child’s condition and provide all relevant information required by the YMCA to properly accommodate their child’s needs to the extent reasonably possible. This information should include: the identified allergen(s), the severity of the allergy, any past incidents of Anaphylactic Reactions, current medications, changes to diagnoses/medication and any other relevant health considerations. If the child has been prescribed an epi-pen the child shall self-carry at all times.
2. All parents/guardians with children who are known to be at risk of anaphylaxis and are participating in *supervised drop-in programs* are required to notify the YMCA HFA staff person in charge of program supervision of their child’s condition and provide all relevant information to properly accommodate their child’s needs to the extent reasonably possible. Parents are required to do this at every class. This information should include: the identified allergen(s), the severity of the allergy, any past incidents of Anaphylactic Reactions, current medications, changes to diagnoses/medication and any other relevant health considerations. If the child has been prescribed an epi-pen the child shall self-carry at all times.
3. All parents/guardians with children not known to be at risk of anaphylaxis should also ensure that they are complying with this Policy and encouraging their children to respect children with Anaphylaxis. Where applicable, parents/guardians should ensure that their children are only bringing safe food products (i.e. no nut products or products that list nuts in the ingredient list) into the YMCA HFA facility or any of its program sites.

To assist with compliance with this Policy by children without anaphylaxis, information explaining this Policy will be provided to everyone who registers for programs at the YMCA HFA centre, and to community members in general by way of posting this Policy on the YMCA’s website.

### **Individualized Plans**

In circumstances where the YMCA HFA has been made aware of a child with anaphylaxis, and the YMCA HFA is administering the program the child is enrolled in or the Third Party is required to comply with this Policy, the YMCA HFA shall develop an individualized plan with the input of the parent/guardian of the child with anaphylaxis. This plan shall include:

- a. Details informing appropriate employees and others who are in direct contact with the child on a regular basis of the type of allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies and appropriate treatment.  
Details include:
  - Name, identifying information, photo of the affected child;
  - Specific allergy/allergies;
  - Signs and symptoms of an accidental exposure;
  - Medication to be administered in the event of an exposure.
- b. A readily accessible emergency procedure for the child, including the requirement to self-carry an Epinephrine Auto-Injector, follow-up plans (i.e. calling 911 or transporting to hospital), and emergency contact information.

At time of registration, this individual emergency information will be entered into the YMCA HFA membership database, and given to program instructors prior to the start of the program.

### **Training Procedures**

All YMCA HFA staff receive training on how to recognize an anaphylactic reaction and the proper administration of an Epinephrine Auto-Injector during annual emergency procedure training. YMCA HFA staff will follow first aid and YMCA training protocols in the event of an anaphylactic reaction.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed at least annually.

### **RELATED POLICIES & LEGISLATION:**

1. Policy on Ableism and Discrimination Based on Disability (2016) <http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/policy-ableism-and-discrimination-based-disability>
2. City of Owen Sound Anaphylaxis Policy CS38  
<https://www.owensound.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/Anaphylaxis-Policy-CS83---March-28-2017.pdf>
3. City of Owen Sound Anaphylaxis Information pamphlet – link to the pamphlet will be inserted as soon as it becomes available.