**Student Accommodation – Food Allergy Procedure**

**Food Allergies**

A food allergy is where your body reacts to certain foods. It's often mild but can be very serious for some people.

**Some common food allergies can include:**

* cows’ milk
* eggs
* nuts eg peanuts, walnuts, brazil nuts, almonds, hazelnut, pecan, cashew, pistachios.
* shellfish eg prawns, crab, lobster
* seeds, such as pine or sesame

Some people can also be allergic to other types of good including celery, mustard, cereal, and lupin flour found in some baked goods.

**Various reactions from allergies include:**

* a runny nose and sneezing
* coughing, wheezing or shortness of breath.
* swollen eyes, lips, mouth, or throat
* tenderness or swelling around the cheeks, eyes, forehead, and mouth
* itchy skin or raised rash (hives)
* throat feels tight and difficulty swallowing.
* feeling dizzy and lightheaded
* feeling sick (nausea) or vomiting
* abdominal pain or diarrhoea
* a sudden and intense feeling of anxiety and fear
* a rapid heartbeat (tachycardia)
* confusion and unconsciousness

**University Life:**

Some research indicates 16–24-year-olds are of high risk in regard to managing food allergies. Some students feel reluctant to share information regarding allergies and keeping their adrenaline auto-injectors (AAI) with them 24/7. Students often become more experimental during university, visiting a variety of restaurants, sharing food and food preparation space in student accommodation with flatmates.

**Tips before moving into your new student accommodation:**

* Get into the routine of checking food labels and ingredient lists every time you buy products.
* Get into the routine of checking the expiry dates of your adrenaline autoinjectors – you can sign up for the expiry alert service via the manufacturer’s website.
* Learn how to cook some meals taking into consideration your food allergies  
  You may wish to ask for specifical permission to bring a mini fridge into your accommodation which has been newly purchased of PAT tested.
* You may wish to consider purchasing a medical bracelet with treatment instructions  
  have an adult allergy action plan ready

**Tips once you have moved into your new student accommodation:**

* Register with a local GP and ensure you pick up repeat prescriptions for adrenaline autoinjector.

## Our procedures:

* We encourage students to disclose food allergies to student accommodation staff when applying for accommodation.
* Several security and student accommodation staff are trained First Aiders.
* We complete a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) if appropriate including where the EpiPen is generally stored eg rucksack.
* We encourage students to disclose any allergies to flatmates along with EpiPen location if appropriate.
* Posters are displayed on the student’s noticeboard if a flatmate has food allergies and how to assist if the student has a reaction.
* In extreme cases of food allergies, we will offer studio flats or smaller 2–5-bedroom flats, when possible, to reduce risks.
* Students with extreme food allergies can request special permission to bring a newly purchased or recently PAT tested mini fridge freezer into their student accommodation bedrooms to store food.

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