Food allergy education and management in schools: A scoping review on current practices & gaps

INTRODUCTION

• Food allergy (FA) affects an estimated 7-8% of children globally
• Pre-pandemic, 20% of severe FA reactions occurred in schools
• Management practices of FA, availability of epinephrine autoinjectors (EAI) and emergency anaphylaxis plan (EAP) varied in school settings

AIM

• To conduct a scoping review on FA and anaphylaxis knowledge and management amongst teachers and school staff, including knowledge differences post-educational intervention

METHOD

• OVID-Medline, PsycInfo and Scopus databases were searched for English and French studies published ≥ 2006
• Primary outcomes: teacher and school staff previous experience, training and schools’ FA-related policies/guidelines

RESULTS

• We included 12 articles in this review
• 8/12 studies conducted pre-post educational interventions; 4/8 had EAI training
• 37-59% of teachers and school staff had prior FA and/or anaphylaxis training
• 51-88% of teachers and school staff previously worked with a student with FA
• Most studies did not provide information on EAI (6/8 studies) or EAP (7/8 studies) availability
• Better knowledge of FA management, attitudes, EAI use and symptom recognition (4/8 studies; 50.0%)
• Sustained knowledge 3-12 months after the session (1/8 studies; 12.5%)
• Higher reported self-efficacy and confidence (3/8 studies; 37.5%)
• Education sessions were useful (2/8 studies; 25.0%)

CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS

• FA-related experience, training, EAI and EAP availability is variable
• Training increased FA knowledge and self-efficacy and confidence
• Annual, standardized FA and anaphylaxis training may be beneficial to optimize FA management

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