



**Senate Bill 156:  
“Colorado Schoolchildren’s Asthma and Anaphylaxis Health Management Act”  
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September 2008**

A new piece of legislation was signed into law several years ago in Colorado that has a direct impact on children with asthma and anaphylaxis. This legislation is known as Senate Bill 156 or the “Colorado Schoolchildren’s Asthma and Anaphylaxis Health Management Act.” Asthma is a chronic lung condition requiring on-going medical attention and intervention. Delays in treatment can result in worsening of this condition and may lead to hospital emergency care or, in some unfortunate cases, fatalities. Anaphylaxis is a systemic allergic reaction that occurs most frequently in response to food allergens, bee stings and medications. If proper intervention is not administered, fatalities can occur.

Why is Senate Bill 156 so important? Children with symptoms of asthma and anaphylaxis frequently have increased health problems at school because of exercise and exposure to allergens. In the past, many children in Colorado schools have not had ready access to their medications. Many states have passed legislation that allows students the right to self-administer asthma inhalers and epinephrine for asthma and anaphylactic symptoms. In Colorado, Senate Bill 156 authorizes public school students with asthma or severe allergies to possess and self-administer prescribed medications during school, while at school sponsored activities, or while going to or from school or related activities, such as field trips and sporting events.

This legislation in Colorado requires a treatment plan, prescribed medications, demonstrated knowledge by the student about the use of the medications, parental authorization, and a release of school liability. This Colorado Senate bill has improved continuity of care, lessened the risk of morbidity and mortality from asthma and anaphylaxis, and has protected Colorado schools from associated legal responsibility. In addition, a set of regulations has been developed by a committee of school nurses to facilitate this process. The healthcare provider can indicate that self administration of necessary medications to treat asthma and anaphylaxis may be appropriate and the school nurse should be involved in determining whether a student is mature and competent enough to self-administer these necessary medications.

This legislation is a real “winwin” situation for Colorado schoolchildren with asthma and anaphylaxis. Remember to discuss these issues with your medical provider and school officials.