

Hello,

My name is Amanda Handcock and I am a mother of 2 young children. Both of which suffer from Anaphylaxis and both of who carry 3-4 epipens each in case of an emergency.

My children are very aware of their allergies, even though they are only 3 and 6 years of age. It is amazing to see how a little education and compassion can go such a long way with regard to learning about allergies, especially life threatening ones.

I believe that people who suffer from allergies are entitled to travel the airways just as well as everyone else. This is not about whose rights are most important. This is about caring and compassion for all passengers.

Hives and sneezing caused by allergens is one thing but when dealing with Anaphylaxis you are dealing with life or death and also something that is highly preventable.

By simply checking ingredients and not offering allergens on airplanes you significantly reduce the risk of having a potential allergic reaction. Airlines can easily accommodate people with Anaphylaxis by restructuring their meals and snacks that are available for free and for purchase.

Also, Allergy Training and Awareness goes a long way in teaching empathy and not encouraging ignorance. Training should be taken by pilots, stewards, and frontline airline staff. Requests by people suffering from Anaphylaxis need to be taken very seriously.

Also, another major aspect of remaining safe in the skies that surely could be done is to have access to Epinephrine (Epi-pens) on airplanes. Anyone who suffers from Anaphylaxis should have their own doses of epinephrine, but for those who have a first attack, this medicine is absolutely necessary and can easily save one's life. By having it on board could mean the difference of life and death.

The great thing about epinephrine is that if it is administered by accident it will cause no harm. Thus, having no potential adverse effects if used improperly.

A person who is suffering from Anaphylaxis can use extra doses of epinephrine until they are in the hands of medical care professionals which is super important when flying in an aircraft because the time it takes to land and get medical attention could be touch and go. All the more reason to have extra medicine on board.

Trust me when I say that having to ask people to forego peanuts on the plane (and other venues) is not something we like doing but we do it because it is so very serious. We often avoid places and areas as much as possible. So when family vacations to far away destinations are considered this is something my family looks at very closely. If regulations are not implemented then we cannot go on an airplane with our children because we do not feel safe. Is this fair? Not really. We do not travel often but it should not be a restriction for our family ever.

If rules and regulations are implemented to safeguard schools, classrooms, etc why can't airlines and Transport Canada do the same. Our family would feel safer and the kids would be happy if they could too, fly without fear of having an allergic reaction. I think simple education would foster a greater understanding of people with severe allergies. We are taking a risk by flying anywhere but with your help that risk can be greatly reduced to make the airways safe for all.

Sincerely,
Amanda Handcock