

Editor,  
National Post  
Re: Food bans: healthy or hysterical? (Feb. 7/09)

While Tom Blackwell's article portrays a variety of perspectives around food allergy, the article as a whole paints an incomplete picture of the reality of families living with potentially life-threatening allergies. Most families understand the risks, take the necessary precautions and work together with other members of the community to keep their kids safe.

There is a genuine fear that accompanies the unpredictability of allergic reactions. There is no way of knowing what quantity of an ingested food will cause an allergic individual to react, nor what the severity of that reaction will be. This fear, coupled with a lack of accurate information, can create heightened anxiety. But highlighting extreme examples that label an entire community as "hysterical" only increases community fear and division at a time when empathy and cooperation are most needed.

There is no "one size fits all" solution to managing food allergies in schools; communities must work together to develop reasonable solutions that are appropriate to the specific situation. To support this objective, Anaphylaxis Canada will be organizing a roundtable discussion with parents, educators, physicians, governments and other community partners this spring to discuss additional strategies for managing food allergies in schools.

Laurie Harada  
Executive Director  
Anaphylaxis Canada