



Suggested Procedures for Severe Allergies & EpiPens

Some children/youth in our faith formation programs may have severe allergic reactions to such things as peanuts or bee-stings. Here are some good practices for handling this situation during the time such a child is present.

- Your program registration form should have an area for parents to indicate allergies other than allergy to medication, which should already be included on the medical form.
- All parents bringing children with severe allergies who may need to receive immediate emergency medication, such as an EpiPen, should fill out the revised Permission to Administer Medication form, Appendix 15 in the policy and procedures area of Faith Formation in the Diocese of Joliet, found on the REO website.
- Parents should never drop off an EpiPen or other medication for their child without providing legal permission and instructions for administering it.
- Ideally, the child should bring his or her own medication with him/her each time he/she comes to the RE session, leave it with the catechist, and take it home after the session is over. If the catechist is not the person who will assist or administer the medication, he or she should know the procedure for obtaining immediate alternate assistance.
- Who actually would administer or assist the child in administering the injection is decided by the parish. Obviously, a trained person is preferable, but any parish personnel or volunteer may do this - only if the medication permission has been signed. The parent should provide instructions – preferably in person to the catechist, the leader and if possible, another person as backup.
- Please note that even when an EpiPen is administered, its effects are only temporary. The child will still need immediate medical treatment, so someone should call 911.
- Leaders should make a notation on the class roster next to the child's name about the allergy, the medication and a procedure – so that if a substitute is in the classroom they would also have the information. Inform all substitutes of the whereabouts and procedures for the EpiPen.
- Everyone who has regular contact with a child with known food allergies should be informed. Other parents in the child's class should be told that another (unnamed) child in their child's session has an allergy – and request that they never send food items to religious education containing this allergen. Many programs have food-bans already in place, but it is best not to assume that no child would ever bring food. Educating other families about the seriousness of the affected child's allergy is a good practice.

Questions about this can be directed to Joyce Donahue or to Paul Mach in the Youth Ministry Office.