How to Prepare Others to Care for Your Child with Food Allergy

This sheet will help you learn ways to keep your child safe while they are at school or with other caregivers.

How should I work with my child's school to keep them safe?

Learn about food allergy for yourself.

Before you can plan for your child's care at school, you need to learn about your child's food allergy. You should know and be able to explain:

- The foods your child must avoid.
- The signs of an allergic reaction.
- The role of medication in your child's treatment.
- The right way to use an epinephrine delivery system, such as an auto-injector or nasal spray.

Learn how your child's school manages food allergy.

Learn the policies and know what you should request. They may already have ways to manage food allergy.

What should you provide to your school.

At the start of every new school year you should provide: unexpired emergency mediciations.

- An allergy emergency care plan completed by your child's pediatrician or allergist.

Learn suggested school guidelines about food allergy.

Read "Food Allergy Safe Schools: The Basics," which is a summary of *Food Allergy Management in Schools (FAMS): Expert Recommendations for K–12.* Find this information and the full expert recommendations on FARE's website: **FoodAllergy.org/FAMS**

Make a plan that keeps your child safe.

Create a written food allergy plan with the school. One example is a 504 Plan.
These plans:

- Outline accommodations, or services that a student with a disability needs to fully join in education. Children with severe food allergies have a disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

- Are available at public schools and any schools that get money from the government. Parents of children who go to private schools that do not get money from the government can work with the school to set up similar plans. Religious schools may not follow Section 504, but state laws may apply. Ask your child's school how to contact their 504 coordinator who can help.

How should I work with babysitters and other caregivers to keep my child safe?

Explain the allergy, which foods to avoid, and the safety steps you follow at home.
Be sure to give enough time for the caregiver to learn the information. You may want to meet with them before they care for your child to give them time to ask questions.

Explain your child's reaction symptoms and tell the babysitter or caregiver what to do.
Show them the food allergy reaction symptoms in your Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan.

Show them how to use an epinephrine delivery system, and make sure they feel ready to use it.
Find videos for epinephrine delivery systems on the FARE website: **foodallergy.org/epinephrine.** Consider teaching your caregiver or babysitter how to administer epinephrine using training devices.

Tell them to act first and call you later.
The most important thing they need to do in case of a severe reaction is to administer epinephrine and call 911. If they are not sure what to do, tell them to use epinephrine. Make sure they know you will not be upset with them. Your child's safety is most important.

Make it easy to reach you.
Leave them your cell phone number, as well as the number of at least 1 other person to call.

Explain the dangers of cross-contact and how to avoid it.
Explain that safe food can become unsafe if just a tiny bit of an allergen touches it. This can happen while cooking and preparing food and using shared utensils and food prep/cooking equipment.

Teach them how to read labels.
Practice reading a few labels with them.

Don't have them provide your child's meals the first few times.
Leave a tray of safe foods to give your child while you are out. Or, ask them to arrive after your child has eaten and is ready for bed. This may be less stressful until you feel good about leaving your child with someone else.

Write everything down.
Keep all important information and instructions together in an easy-to-find place. You can use a bright-colored binder in the kitchen. If you do this, make sure all information is up to date.

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