

UCC Children's Ministries
ALLERGY AWARENESS POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

Because UCC Children's Ministries seeks to provide a safe environment for all children in our care, the following Allergy Awareness Policy and Action Plan is in place to address and respond to the wide-ranging allergies and allergic reactions common among children.

This policy recognizes that there are many different events where food is served at UCC. For some events food is prepared and brought from outside. It also recognizes, with the number of groups and types of events, that there needs to be flexibility.

It is important to note that we cannot guarantee a completely allergy-free environment and cannot be held liable for allergic reactions that occur in spite of the policies and procedures outlined below. However, we are deeply committed to working with the families in our congregation to support children with allergies when at all possible.

Responsibilities of Parent or Legal Guardian

1. The first time a child with allergies participates in an activity at UCC
 - a. *Sunday mornings* - parents will complete a Visitor Registration form with special attention given to the "Health Concerns/Special Instructions" portion of the form notifying the ministry leaders of any allergies.
 - b. *Wednesday evenings* - parents will complete a Medical, Media and Liability Release Form with special attention given to the medical allergies, medication being taken, medical problems portion of the form notifying the ministry leaders of any allergies.
2. Notify ministry leaders of the action plan in case of emergency including contact information and building location where the parents can be reached at all times.
3. Parents are the only ones who may administer medication. UCC staff and volunteers are not permitted to administer regularly prescribed or over the counter medication to any child. The only exception:
 - a. severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) with the preapproved use of an epinephrine autoinjector. Epinephrine autoinjectors can only be obtained by the parent from their child's doctor and will be kept in a safe location at the church.
 - b. Because of the number of volunteers needed for our programs, parents should notify the volunteer responsible for their child of the anaphylactic allergy each time their child is in attendance.
4. Parents must keep medical information and action plan current by communicating with the ministry leaders when there are any changes to the child's condition.
5. In case of food allergy an alternate snack should be provided by the parent.

Responsibilities of UCC Children's Ministries

1. Informing all children's workers and volunteers of this policy and these procedures.
2. Informing parents of children with allergies of UCC's policies and procedures.
3. Pay close attention to Visitor Registration forms and Medical, Media and Liability forms to identify children with allergies noting any special instructions and communicating them to the children's workers and volunteers.
4. Signs will be posted when snacks are served in the Children's Wing classrooms and care will be taken so that children with allergies are kept from coming in contact with whatever they are sensitive to.

5. Bracelets will be provided for preschool and elementary children with severe allergies. In the nursery a red dot will be placed on the child's name tag.
6. *In the Nursery* only a dry cereal snack from the approved safe list may be served by nursery staff. Parents may provide bottles to be given to their children as needed.
7. *In Preschool Programs, including Jr. Church for K-3, only snacks that are on the preapproved list may be served.* The preapproved snack list is posted in each classroom and can be obtained from ministry leaders.
8. *In Elementary programs, serving any snack with tree nuts is discouraged but not prohibited.* If it is known ahead of time that food will be served, volunteers and children's workers will be expected to notify the parents of children with food allergies so that an acceptable alternative snack can be offered for the child. In the case of a severe (anaphylactic) allergy, volunteers and children's workers are encouraged to provide an alternate snack for the whole class to minimize the risk of exposure.
9. Notify parent or guardian immediately if a child shows any signs of an allergic reaction. In case of anaphylaxis call 911 and follow the parent's action plan.

Food Allergy Symptoms in Children from *The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network Food Allergy News. 2003:13(2).*

Children with food allergies might communicate their symptoms in the following ways:

- If feels like something is poking my tongue.
- My tongue (or mouth) is tingling (or burning)
- My tongue (or mouth) itches.
- My tongue feels like there is hair on it.
- My mouth feels funny.
- There's frog in my throat; there's something stuck in my throat.
- My tongue feels full (or heavy).
- My lips feel tight.
- It feels like there are bugs in there (to describe itchy ears).
- It (my throat) feels thick.
- It feels like bump is on the back of my tongue (throat).

Allergens that May Result in Anaphylaxis that Require Use of Epinephrine from the *CDC Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care Education Programs.*

- Foods such as peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, fish, or shellfish
- Medications such as penicillin or aspirin
- Bee venom or insect stings, such as from yellow jackets, wasps, hornets or fire ant
- Latex, such as from gloves

Despite all the best efforts to be Allergy Aware, we recognize that this policy cannot guarantee that products with allergens will not be served. Therefore, people with food allergies, and parents of children with food allergies, are to be responsible and diligent in protecting themselves and their children when they are at Upland Community Church.