

Anaphylaxis Policy – St. Mark's United Church, 2005

Purpose

The goal of this policy is to ensure everything that is reasonably possible is done to provide a safe environment for people with life-threatening allergies who worship at and participate in St. Mark's United Church. We recognize that it is not possible to reduce the risk to zero. However it is the goal of this policy to maximize the ability of people with allergies to participate safely in church activities.

Definition

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction. It can be life-threatening. Food is the most common cause of anaphylaxis, but insect stings, medicine, latex, or exercise can also cause a reaction. The most common food allergens are peanuts, tree nuts, seafood, egg and milk products.

Division of Responsibilities

In a church setting, where activities are organized and staffed by volunteers, the cooperation of the entire church community is needed to ensure the safety of people affected with allergies that may result in anaphylaxis.

- People should inform the church of their allergy. In the case of a child, the parent or guardian should provide this information. This information should be provided to all committee members.
- It is recommended that a MedicAlert bracelet be worn by the person with the allergy.
- All parents and guardians of children with allergies, Sunday school teachers, Youth leaders and Board members are expected to attend the annual information session on allergy awareness.

The key to preventing an anaphylactic emergency is absolute avoidance of the allergen. Individuals with food allergies should not share food, eat unmarked /bulk foods, or products which have the "may contain" warnings. The most common food allergen is peanuts and peanut products.

- Permanent notices will be posted on the doors of the church and in the kitchen to notify people that we wish to restrict food with peanut products and state that the food items containing peanuts should not be brought into the church.
- All correspondence regarding an event where food will be present should contain a reminder to avoid peanut content.
- Annually in September, the Board will place an awareness article in the church MEMO related to current allergies.
- Annually in September, the Board will hold an open allergy awareness session regarding allergic reactions leading to anaphylaxis.
- Annually in September, the Sunday School will hold an awareness class for the children.
- Annually in September, all building users will be informed of the policy.
- Parents will be informed of any outdoor and off-site church activities their children may be participating in.

The ultimate responsibility for the food consumed at church is that of the individual and his or her parent or guardian.

Epinephrine Pen (Epi-pen)

It is the responsibility of the person with the allergy (or in the case of a child, the parent or guardian) to carry their own epi-pen at all times.