



# Use of Epi-Pen® by non-EMS Personnel

## Frequently Asked Question

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*Can summer camp counselors, lifeguards, day care teachers, and similar occupations administer an EpiPen® to a child who is experiencing an allergic reaction?*

New Jersey has specific regulations which apply to emergency medical providers (8:40A-9.3), school nurses (18A:40-12.6), and other professional healthcare providers about the use of EpiPens®. However, there is nothing which specifically governs the lay rescuer. A lay rescuer is someone who, not as part of their license or specialized training, provides care for an injured or ill person. New Jersey's Good Samaritan law (N.J.A.C. 2A:62A-1) would provide protection from civil liability while providing emergency care in good faith. However, childcare organizations should have policies regarding medical emergencies involving children, including the use of an EpiPen® or EpiPen Jr.®.

Summer camps and day cares often require a medical history for each child. Known allergies and medications taken are typically listed. If a child has a severe allergic reaction and has been prescribed an EpiPen®, this should be noted and a follow-up conversation held with the parent / guardian on the exact circumstances and doctor's orders concerning the reaction signs and severity after an exposure. This information should be confidentially shared with the child's immediate caregiver, with the parent's permission.

Typically, a release is signed by the parent or guardian permitting emergency care by the childcare organization. For children with life-threatening allergic reactions, a specific release for the EpiPen may be included.

Adult caregivers of children have a responsibility to safeguard the child's health and welfare. Organizations such as summer camps or day care may employ a mix of adult leaders and teenage assistants. The policy should address the roles of each in an emergency. Some important components:

- At what age will counselors be permitted to use an EpiPen®? We believe only designated and trained adults (over 18 yrs. old) should be allowed to use the auto-injector.
- Will the child be allowed to self-administer? We believe children should be allowed to self-administer their medications.
- Will the child be allowed to carry their EpiPen? Timely access to medication is key.

**Whoever is permitted to administer the auto-injector must be trained.** Training should be provided by a recognized training organization or qualified individual, and should include:

- Recognizing the signs and symptoms of a life-threatening allergic reaction or anaphylaxis
- Initiating the appropriate emergency response, including calling 9-1-1
- The proper use of the EpiPen. The manufacturer of the EpiPen provides a video that can be streamed at <http://www.epipen.com/how-to-use-epipen>
- Follow-up care and basic first aid

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