

## The Most Critical Information About Your Child

The yellow section on the front of the **Emergency Information Form** is the most important part of the form, the **Critical Information Box**.

The image shows a yellow-highlighted section of a form titled "The most critical information to know about my child is:". Below this title are several lines for text entry. The form includes the following sections: "Communication critical issues", "Age appropriate name", "Age appropriate function", "Potentially life threatening conditions", "Conditions needing constant attention", "Medicines", "Life threatening conditions", "OH for my child to skip a dose of their medicines", "Medical or adapted equipment", "Special Diet", "Special diet. See Medical Information Form", "Is child wearing a Medical Alert", and "Planning documents for life threatening conditions".

**Think about your child’s “elevator story.”** If you were riding in an elevator and had just a few minutes to tell someone the most important emergency information about your child, what would you say? **Those key points** go in the **Critical Information Box**. Use short, simple phrases and common terms to talk about your child. Avoid medical or special education terms since responders and other emergency helpers may not know them.

**Look at the Emergency Help and Supports Checklist to jog your memory.** Think about the 3-5 most important pieces of information someone should know to help your child in an emergency. Each child’s situation will be different. For example, one child may need to have his communication device with him at all times. Another child’s daily blood tests would be the most important thing. For another child behaviors might be the main issue.

**Communication:** Write down the key issues your child has speaking, understanding, and following directions.

**Key personality characteristics:** Include both “positive” and “negative” traits so responders and other emergency helpers can better understand your child. Examples include: “cooperative,” “gets anxious easily” and “may run away if challenged.”

**Key signs of normal function:** Behaviors and health information (sometimes called “baseline information”) that someone who doesn’t know your child might not know as normal. Examples include making movements or sounds your child can’t control, drooling or basal temperature.

**Potentially life threatening conditions:** List your child’s potentially life threatening conditions. Examples include a seizure disorder, heart condition or life threatening allergies.

**Conditions needing constant attention:** List conditions that need constant attention or supervision. Examples include checking insulin levels, daily blood or other tests, and constant safety monitoring.

The **Medicines**, **Medical or adapted equipment** and **Special Diet** sections of the form call for only the most important information. Later you can add less important information to the **Medical Information Form**. The **Medical Alert** section asks if your child wears medical alert bracelets, necklaces or has an alert tag attached to sneakers or elsewhere.

**Planning documents for life threatening condition:** Some parents have a planning document in which they describe the kind of treatment they want or don’t want for their child under 18 years old in case of a life threatening condition. Some people over 18 year old years old have a health care proxy under Massachusetts law. If this doesn’t apply to your child, write “N/A”