



A guide to...

Adrenaline Auto Injector (AAI) - Epipen

Patient information

How to contact us

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If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version,
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Epipen®

What is Epipen?

Epipen is an automatic adrenaline injector (AAI). It contains a medicine called Adrenaline. This medicine is needed to treat anaphylaxis, the most severe allergic reaction.

Your doctor will have discussed the reasons why your child may need an Epipen. **Two pens** should be **available at all times**, in case your child has an unpredictable allergic reaction.

If your child has a mild or moderate reaction then they will need to be given anti-histamine medication (Cetirizine or Chlorphenamine). But if the reaction is more severe and involves their airway, breathing or circulation, or there is a risk of a more severe reaction, then the adrenaline pen must be given.

As part of the allergy planning, a specific **allergy plan** (to the right) will have been given to you which you should also give to your child's school.

Generally allergy is managed by:

<p>Avoidance</p>	<p>You MUST avoid any foods which you know your child is allergic to. Take care with labels and risk assess any new foods and when eating out in a restaurant or from a take-away.</p>
<p>Anti-histamine</p>	<p>Have anti-histamine available. For children over 1 year this is Cetirizine which is non-drowsy. Liquid is easier to take than tablets if a reaction involves the mouth or tongue.</p>
<p>Adrenaline Pen</p>	<p>Ensure you have your 'allergy kit' including the action plan, antihistamine and your child's TWO adrenaline pens and an inhaler and spacer if appropriate with you AT ALL TIMES.</p>

Your EpiPen and EpiPen Junior

There are two types of pen – EpiPen for an older child and EpiPen Jr (junior) for a younger child. Both contain the same medicine, but in different doses.



EpiPen is **yellow**

It contains **300 micrograms**

For children weighing over 25kg
25kg



EpiPen Jr is **green**

It contains **150 micrograms**

For children weighing between 7.5 and

Further information can be found on the
company website:
<http://www.epipen.co.uk/>

From November 2018 there has been a change in how to give the EpiPen.

- Instead of holding for 10 seconds the advice is to **hold for 3 seconds**
- Instead of rubbing the injection area the advice is **no need to massage the injection site.**

The action plans have not yet been updated so it would still be OK to do the 10 second hold and rub but the change is to emphasise calling 999 as soon as possible in a severe allergic reaction.

Expiry Alert Service

Sign up for the **Expiry Alert Service** and receive free reminders by text or email when your EpiPen is about to expire. <http://www.epipen.co.uk/patients/expiry-alert-service/>. If you have more than one pen with the same expiry date then you only need to sign up once. If your pens have different expiry dates, you should register each pen.

Why two pens?

A number of important medication authorities and health agencies have reviewed the evidence around using adrenaline auto-injectors to treat a severe allergic reaction. The consistent recommendation is that patients who have been prescribed an auto-injector **should carry two adrenaline pens at all times**; however, normally only one auto-injector is required for self-administration during a reaction. The reason for two pens includes the device failing in some way when used (this is extremely rare), the person using it incorrectly so the dose is wasted (this is more common and is why training is very important) or some people need an extra dose of adrenaline when they have a severe reaction (this is less common too).

The local health board (Hearts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group) have produced guidance about the prescribing of adrenaline pens by GPs. This is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/HVCCG-AAI-Info>. This means that your child's school or nursery may be asked to provide an additional pen as well as the one (or two) your child carries. See the 'Spare Pens in Schools' link below.

Further information about allergies

Allergy UK is a UK charity dedicated to allergy
The Anaphylaxis Campaign
Spare Pens in Schools

www.allergyUK.org
www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/
www.sparepensinschools.uk/

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