



A guide to...

Adrenaline Auto Injector (AAI) - Epipen

Patient information

How to contact us

Children's Services - Allergy Dept
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Tel: 01923 4367246

If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version,
please call **01923 217 198** or email westherts.pals@nhs.net



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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.

bsaci ALLERGY ACTION PLAN RCPCH

This child has the following allergies:

Name: _____ DOB: _____

Photo: _____

Watch for signs of ANAPHYLAXIS (life-threatening allergic reaction)
 Anaphylaxis may occur without skin symptoms. ALWAYS consider anaphylaxis in someone with known food allergy who has **SUDDEN BREATHING DIFFICULTY**

1 AIRWAY
 - Facial swelling
 - Hoarse voice
 - Difficulty swallowing
 - Swollen tongue

2 BREATHING
 - Tiredness or lethargy
 - Wheezing or persistent cough

3 CONSCIOUSNESS
 - Fainting or dizziness
 - Pale or floppy
 - Profound sleep

IF ANY ONE (OR MORE) OF THESE SIGNS ABOVE ARE PRESENT:
1 Lie child flat with legs raised (if breathing is difficult, allow child to sit)
2 Give adrenaline immediately (follow dose on Epipen®) (Dose: 0.3 - 0.5)
3 Dial 999 for ambulance and say ANAPHYLAXIS (SAY IT, AS IT)
***** IF IN DOUBT, GIVE ADRENALINE *****

AFTER GIVING ADRENALINE:
 1 Stay with child until ambulance arrives. **DO NOT** check child up
 2 Transport to hospital if you see no signs of life
 3 Fluids **cannot** replace epinephrine
 4 If no improvement **after 5 minutes**, give a **further adrenaline dose** using a second auto-injector (if available)
 Note: Use of AAI does not replace the need for other medical interventions such as oxygen and fluids.

Mild/moderate reaction:
 - Swelling, hives, rash or spots
 - Itchy/ringing mouth
 - Nausea or other GI upset
 - Abdominal pain or vomiting
 - Sudden change in behaviour

Action to take:
 - Stay with the child, call for help if necessary
 - Lower adrenaline auto-injector
 - Give **antihistamine**
CETIRIZINE 5mg (if available) **OR** **CHLORPHENAMINE** 2mg (if available)
 - Phone parent/emergency contact

Emergency contact details:
 1) _____
 2) _____

Parental consent: I hereby authorize the staff to administer adrenaline to my child in the event of an allergic reaction and to use the auto-injector if necessary. I understand that adrenaline is a life-saving medicine. I do not consent to the use of an auto-injector if the parent of the child is present.

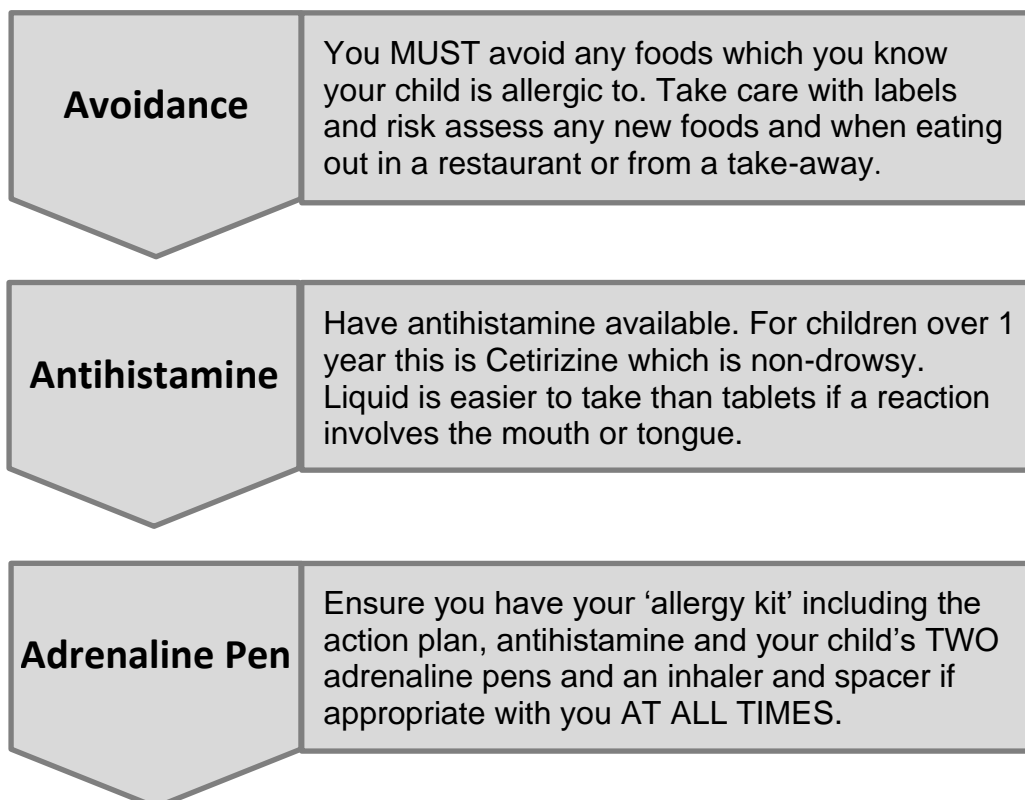
How to give EpiPen:
 1. Pull off BLUE SAFETY CAP AND GRIP DEVICE. Remember: This is to be thrown away in the trash.
 2. Hold leg and PLACE ORANGE END against child's outer thigh (flesh, not bone or clothing).
 3. PRESS DOWN HARD until a click is heard. It will hold in place for 5 seconds. Release Epipen.

Additional instructions:
 If already GIVE ADRENALINE FIRST, then antihistamine (give orally) via spacer

For more information about managing anaphylaxis in schools and 'open' back up adrenaline auto-injectors, visit: openpen.co.uk

Dr. Ashly Renee, Consultant Paediatrician
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 Copy for: Parents GP Notes Comm Nurses

Generally allergy is managed by:



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



EpiPen Jr is green

It contains 150 micrograms

For children weighing
between 7.5 and 25kg

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 have produced guidance about the prescribing of adrenaline pens by GPs. 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

www.allergyUK.org

The Anaphylaxis Campaign

www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/

Spare Pens in Schools

www.sparepensinschools.uk/