

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Re: Information on Anaphylaxis and Adrenaline Auto-Injectors

We are writing to you because your child is at risk of anaphylaxis, and they have been prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors.

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that happens quickly. It usually happens after contact with something your child is allergic to.

It can be life-threatening and needs emergency treatment right away.

An adrenaline auto-injector, like EpiPen® or Jext®, gives a quick dose of adrenaline. This helps stop the allergic reaction while waiting for emergency help.

If you think your child is having an anaphylactic reaction you must:

1. Use their adrenaline auto-injector immediately
2. Call 999 and say it's anaphylaxis
3. Take your child to hospital — even if they feel better

We strongly encourage you to:

- Read through the attached frequently asked questions.
- Ensure your child's adrenaline auto-injectors are in date and always carried with your child.
- Share your child's allergy action plan with school or childcare settings and ensure they have their own with them or access to an adrenaline auto-injector while there.
- Speak with your child's GP, allergy specialist or pharmacist if you need further advice or training.

Anaphylaxis and Adrenaline Auto-Injectors (AAI)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for parents

What is anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that happens quickly. It can be life-threatening and needs emergency treatment right away.

It usually starts within minutes but can also happen up to 2–3 hours after contact with something your child is allergic to.

Common triggers include:

- Cow's milk
- Peanuts and other nuts
- Fish and seafood
- Insect bites
- Medicines

How can I tell if my child is having an anaphylactic reaction?

Look out for:

- Trouble breathing
- Swollen throat or tongue
- Rash or itchy skin
- Dizziness or collapse

If this happens:

1. Use their adrenaline auto-injector immediately
2. Call 999 and say it's anaphylaxis
3. Take your child to hospital—even if they feel better

Once your child is stable, your GP can refer them to an allergy specialist for further testing and diagnosis. If an allergy is confirmed, your child will receive an allergy action plan along with adrenaline auto-injectors for emergency use.

The most effective way to keep your child safe is to avoid known allergens entirely.

What is an adrenaline auto-injector and how does it help?

An adrenaline auto-injector (brand names EpiPen or Jext) gives a quick dose of adrenaline. This helps stop the allergic reaction while waiting for emergency help.

How do I get an Adrenaline auto-injector for my child?

If a doctor thinks your child is at risk of anaphylaxis, they can:

- Refer to an allergy specialist
- Give you a prescription for two adrenaline auto-injectors to carry at all times
- Provide an allergy action plan to share with school or carers

Your child will usually be given two adrenaline auto-injectors to carry at all times.

Some schools hold emergency adrenaline auto-injectors, but your child **should still** have their own prescribed devices available at school and carry it on their person at all times or be able to access it easily in a safe, clearly labelled and easy to reach place.

When should I give an Adrenaline auto-injector?

Use it at the first sign of a serious reaction. These may include:

- Tight throat or difficulty breathing
- Swelling or tingling in the mouth or tongue
- Skin rash, hives, or itching
- Faintness or collapse

If symptoms have not improved 5 minutes after using the adrenaline auto-injector, another dose with a new adrenaline auto-injector can be given.

Call 999 for an ambulance as soon as the 1st dose of the adrenaline is given and state “it is for anaphylaxis”

You must take your child to hospital after using the adrenaline auto-injector, even if they seem well. Take the adrenaline auto-injector with you. Tell the doctor which adrenaline auto-injector you used, and how many.

How should I give Adrenaline auto-injector?

- There are two different types of adrenaline auto-injector – EpiPen and Jext. These are used in different ways. You **MUST** follow the instructions provided with your auto-injector. If you are not sure which auto-injector you have, or how to use it, ask your doctor, nurse or pharmacist to show you.
- The adrenaline auto-injector must only be used in the thigh. Never inject it anywhere else on the body.
- Keep your adrenaline auto-injectors in date but remember that even an out of date pen is better than nothing.

Detailed information on how to use adrenaline auto-injectors can be found on the manufacturers' websites:

- EpiPen® – www.epipen.co.uk
- Jext® (Lifeline) – www.jext.co.uk

How many do you need?

Make sure that you always have at least two adrenaline auto-injectors on you or your child at all times. Order a new prescription as soon as you have used one.

Does the medicine expire?

Yes. Check the expiry date regularly. Ask your GP for a new prescription if it's expired. Old adrenaline auto-injectors can be taken to a pharmacy for safe disposal.

Can I keep Adrenaline auto-injectors at school?

Yes. Children should carry their adrenaline auto injectors themselves if they are old enough or the school can keep them in a safe, clearly labelled and easy to reach place (not locked away).

Schools can also buy spare adrenaline auto-injectors, but they need your signed consent to use them on your child as part of an agreed school care plan.

What should I do as a parent?

- Keep the school updated about your child's allergies.
- Make sure your child's allergy plan is current and shared with the school.
- If your child is able to, let them carry their adrenaline auto injectors on themselves at all times
- Provide the school with in-date adrenaline auto-injectors. In some cases, schools can order spare adrenaline auto-injectors for use in line with an agreed care plan.
- Sign the consent form for the school to use a spare adrenaline auto-injector if needed.
- Keep your contact details up to date in case of emergencies and ensure you are reachable in case of emergencies.

Who do I contact for more information?

Your child's doctor, pharmacist or nurse will be able to give you more information about adrenaline auto-injectors and about other medicines used to treat allergies and anaphylaxis.

You can contact an allergy charity for further guidance and support:

- [Anaphylaxis UK](#) 01252 542029
- [Allergy UK](#) 01322 619898