



# EpiPen<sup>®</sup> and EpiPen Jr.<sup>®</sup>

## Patient and Family Education

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### What is an EpiPen?

EpiPen is a way to help treat a severe allergic reaction.

- It looks like a pen and consists of a dose of medicine, a chamber to hold the medicine and a needle.
- The medicine is called epinephrine, which is used to treat allergic reactions. It needs to be injected into a muscle to work.

### When should the EpiPen be used?

The EpiPen is used for sudden, severe allergic reactions. A severe allergic reaction is called anaphylaxis (an-a-fil-ak'-sis). Anaphylaxis is an emergency and needs to be treated **right away**. Signs of a severe allergic reaction may include one or more of the following:

- Hives
- Swelling, especially of the lips and face
- Trouble breathing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Muscle cramping
- Coughing and wheezing that does not stop

If your child has any of these signs and you think he may be having an allergic emergency, use the EpiPen **right away and call 911**.

### What dose of epinephrine does my child need?

Your child's dose is based on his body weight. Your child's doctor will prescribe the dose that is right for him. Each pen contains one dose of epinephrine.

- The EpiPen contains 0.3 mg and is for older children and adults.
- The EpiPen Jr contains 0.15 mg and is for children who weigh up to about 60 pounds.
- Sometimes one dose of epinephrine is not enough. Your child's doctor may prescribe more than one EpiPen. If so, follow your child's doctor's instructions.

### What causes severe allergic reactions?

Allergic reactions may occur from many causes including:

- Insect bites or stings
- Foods
- Drugs
- Latex

### **In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.**

This is general information and is not specific medical advice for your child. These instructions contain some common facts about your child's medicine. They do not describe all uses, side effects and safety information. Always consult your child's doctor or other healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about the care or health of your child. A Children's Healthcare of Atlanta pediatric advice nurse is available 24 hours a day at 404-250-KIDS.

# EpiPen, continued

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## How do I use the EpiPen?

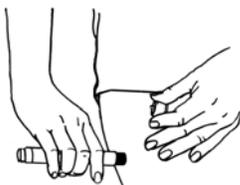
- Your child's doctor, nurse or pharmacist can give you a demonstration using a training device like the EpiPen.
- Read the instructions that come in each package soon after you get it. This helps you learn about using the EpiPen before you need to use it in an emergency.
- Instructions are also printed on each EpiPen.

To use the EpiPen on your child:

- Form a fist around the EpiPen. The black tip will face down. Do not touch the black tip with your fingers, thumb or hand.
- Pull off the grey safety cap.
- Place the black tip against your child's outer thigh. You do not need to remove your child's clothing first.
- Quickly push the EpiPen firmly against your child's thigh. This will release a dose of epinephrine.
- Hold the EpiPen in place for a count of 10.
- Remove the EpiPen from your child's thigh.



Pull off cap



Place tip of EpiPen against thigh



Push EpiPen firmly against thigh

- Carefully put the EpiPen back into the carrying tube without replacing the safety cap. Put the needle end into the tube first. Re-cap the carrying tube.
- **Call 911.**
- Take the used EpiPen with you to the hospital emergency room for proper disposal.

## How do I know my child got a dose of the medicine?

The medicine is released when you press the EpiPen against your child's thigh. If you can see the needle when you remove the EpiPen from your child's thigh, the medicine has been released.

## Can I re-use the EpiPen?

No. The EpiPen should only be used once. Once you use the EpiPen, get another one at your drug store **right away**, so you have it to use in case of another emergency.

## What will my child feel after I use the EpiPen?

Using the EpiPen causes very little pain. Your child may feel a faster heartbeat, nervousness, sweating, dizziness and headache. These feelings usually go away on their own.

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## EpiPen, continued

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### When should I call my child's doctor?

- After using the EpiPen, **call 911 right away.**
- The effects of the EpiPen begin to wear off after 10 – 20 minutes.
- Make sure you tell the doctor that you have used the EpiPen on your child.

### Does the EpiPen expire?

Yes. The expiration date is printed right on the EpiPen.

### Can my child use the EpiPen himself?

Many older children use the EpiPen themselves. Talk with your child's doctor about when to train your child to use the EpiPen and call 911 himself.

### Who else needs to have an EpiPen for my child?

Check with your child's doctor about who else should have an EpiPen and learn how to use it for your child. Others may include:

- Daycare or school workers.
- Other close relatives such as grandparents.
- Other adults that may be around your child for long periods of time, such as scout leaders or team coaches.

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