

# MEDfacts

An Educational Health Series From National Jewish Health®



## Using An Epi-Pen®

The EpiPen® Auto-Injector is an easy and convenient way to give epinephrine. Epinephrine is a medicine used to treat an anaphylactic reaction. Anaphylaxis is a systemic (whole body), life threatening allergic reaction. It is the most severe type of allergic reaction. The EpiPen® is designed to provide fast, reliable first-aid for an anaphylactic reactions. It works quickly to help reverse symptoms which may follow exposure to insect bites and stings, food or drug reactions and exercise-induced anaphylaxis.

The EpiPen® Auto-Injector is compact and easily carried in your pocket, purse or fanny-pack. The EpiPen® is pre-assembled, filled and ready to use right away. A tiny, concealed, spring-activated needle penetrates the skin once the syringe is activated. The EpiPen® is available in two strengths: EpiPen® (yellow label) and EpiPen® Jr (green label). Your health care provider will prescribe the EpiPen® that you should use. You should be taught how to use the EpiPen® by a health care professional.

### How To Use An EpiPen® or EpiPen® Jr. Auto-Injector

#### Remove the EpiPen from the carrier tube

- Flip open the yellow cap of the EpiPen® or the green cap from the EpiPen® Jr Auto-Injector carrier tube.
- Remove the EpiPen® or EpiPen® Jr. Auto-Injector by tipping and sliding it out of the carrier tube.

#### Give the EpiPen® injection

- Grasp the unit with the orange tip pointing downward. Never put your hands, fingers or thumb over the orange tip.
- Form a fist around the unit (orange tip down).
- With your other hand, pull off the blue safety cap.
- Hold the orange tip near the outer thigh.
- Hold the leg firmly when giving the EpiPen® injection. This means holding a young child's leg firmly in place and limit movement.

## REGISTER NOW

to Receive **FREE** Health  
Tips, Research Findings,  
Ways to Support Our  
Mission, News &  
More in Your E-Mail Box

Visit [njhealth.org/e-news](http://njhealth.org/e-news)  
for more information.

## Follow us online!

**facebook**

[facebook.com/NJHealth](http://facebook.com/NJHealth)

**You Tube**

[youtube.com/NationalJewish](http://youtube.com/NationalJewish)

**twitter**

[twitter.com/njhealth](http://twitter.com/njhealth)

- Swing and firmly push against the outer thigh until it clicks so that the unit is perpendicular (at 90° angle) to the thigh. Do **not** inject into the buttocks.
- Hold firmly against the thigh for 3 seconds to deliver the medicine.
- Remove the unit from the thigh (the orange needle cover will extend to cover the needle) and massage the injection area for 10 seconds.
- Call 911 and seek medical attention right away. The effects from this medicine may wear off in 10-20 minutes.
- Take the used auto-injector with you to the hospital emergency room.

### Special Tips About Using an EpiPen® Auto-Injector

- **Remember, if you use the EpiPen® you should call 911 and seek medical attention right away. The effects from this medication may wear off in 10-20 minutes.**
- After using the EpiPen®, most people experience a rapid heartbeat and "nervousness." Ask your health care provider for a complete list of side effects.
- Watch for signs or symptoms of infection, such as persistent redness, warmth, swelling, or tenderness, at the EpiPen® injection site. See the health care provider if this occurs.
- Keep your EpiPen® at room temperature. Do not expose it to extreme cold, heat or direct sunlight. Refrigeration can cause the Auto-Injector to malfunction. Light and heat can cause the medicine to go bad, turning brown. Look through the viewing window of the unit regularly, to make sure the solution is clear and colorless.
- Check the expiration date on your EpiPen®. Be sure to replace your EpiPen® before the expiration date. You can dispose of an expired EpiPen at the Doctors office or hospital.

Note: This information is provided to you as an educational service of LUNG LINE® (1.800.222.LUNG). It is not meant to be a substitute for consulting with your own physician.

©Copyright May, 1995, 2012, 2016 National Jewish Health  
PTE.094