

# Life Threatening Allergic Reactions

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# Anaphylaxis

**Anaphylaxis (anaphylactic reaction)** is a severe, life-threatening sensitivity to an antigen (unwanted substance).

- A medical emergency, signs and symptoms can occur within seconds:
  - Sweating
  - Shortness of breath
  - Low blood pressure
  - Irregular pulse
  - Respiratory congestion
  - Swelling of the larynx (laryngeal edema), lips, face and neck
  - Hoarseness
  - Dyspnea



# Triggers

- Bee stings
- Food allergies
  - Peanuts
  - Tree Nuts
  - Eggs
  - Wheat
  - Soy
  - Many, many more

# Epinephrine

- It quickly constricts blood vessels, raising blood pressure
- It relaxes smooth muscles in the lungs to improve breathing
- It stimulates the heart beat
- Will cause the heart rate to increase
- It works to reverse the hives and swelling around the face and lips

# When To Give The EpiPen...

Based on student's symptoms:

- Hives spreading over the body
  - Wheezing, difficulty breathing or swallowing
  - Swelling in the face, neck, tongue or tingling in the tongue
  - Vomiting
  - Signs of shock such as extreme paleness/gray color, clammy skin, loss of consciousness
  - Any other child specific known symptom
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- Administer EpiPen
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- Call 911!

***Epinephrine buys you time....  
Epinephrine SAVES LIVES!***

# What Does Epinephrine Look Like?



Epinephrine is available as an auto-injector called an EpiPen and comes in 2 different doses:

- EpiPen 0.3mg (over approx. 55lbs)  
**Yellow** box/label
- EpiPen Jr. 0.15mg (under approx. 55lbs)  
**Green** box/label

# Where Do I Give The EpiPen?

- The EpiPen is administered **ONLY** into the large outer thigh muscles
- Can be given through clothing
- Give at a 90 degree angle (both sizes)

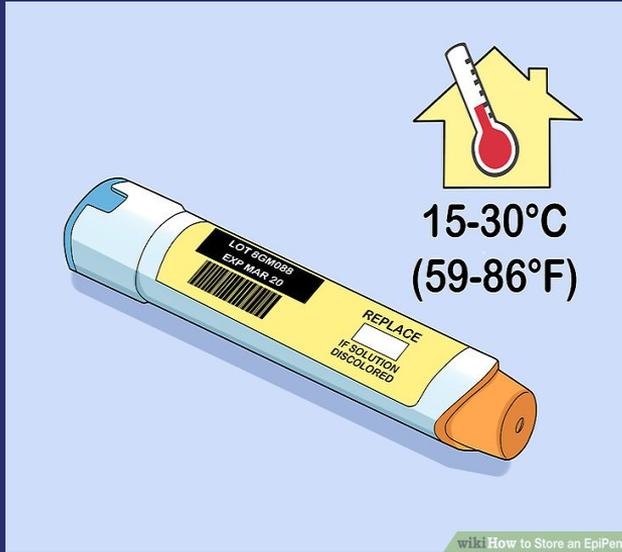


▶ Khan (2022)

# Steps in EpiPen Administration

- Have the student lie down
- Look at EpiPen directions. It states:
  1. Pull off blue safety release cap.
  2. Hold orange tip near outer thigh. Stabilize thigh.
  3. Swing and firmly push orange tip against outer thigh so it clicks.
  4. Hold firmly in thigh for 3 seconds.
  5. Massage area for 5 seconds.

# Epinephrine Storage



- Epinephrine is stored at room temperature until the marked expiration date



# After EpiPen Administration...

- Document the time of administration.
- Don't throw away used EpiPen. Keep and give to EMS.
- Notify school nurse.
- Notify parents/guardian regarding incident, student's condition and hospital destination.

# Video

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KzHebySkD6c>

# References

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