

# Advice for parents of a child with a severe allergy

If you're the parent or carer of a child with a severe allergy, there is expert advice available on the supply of EpiPens and other adrenaline auto-injectors.

## **EpiPen Junior**

You might already know about a problem with the supply of EpiPen Junior, which is expected to last several months.

If you have your normal supplies of EpiPen Junior, continue just as you normally would. That means:

- try and avoid the things your child is allergic to as much as possible
- if your child has a severe allergic or anaphylactic reaction:
  - [give them their adrenaline pen](#) straight away
  - call 999 (say 'anaphylaxis' even if your child starts to feel better)
  - say you think your child has had a severe allergic reaction and that you have given them an adrenaline pen
- check the expiry dates of all your EpiPen Juniors – the expiry date of a pen is the final day of the month listed on the device (for example the final date of a November pen is 30 November)
- don't ask for a repeat prescription until the expiry date is nearly reached – stocks of pens will be kept for those who need them most

## **Other adrenaline auto-injectors**

If you need a replacement EpiPen Junior and haven't been able to get one, you might instead be given a device called Jext or Emerade. These might say epinephrine on them but it is exactly the same drug.

These pens are used in a different way, so you will need to read the instructions and/ or watch a training video to learn how to use it.

Your GP or practice nurse can give you advice on your new pen.

If you have been given a pen that is in-date, but not your usual brand, it's better to use this than using an out-of-date pen that is your usual brand.

## **If all your auto-injectors are out-of-date**

If your child has a severe allergic or anaphylactic reaction and all the adrenaline pens you have are out-of-date you should:

- give the out-of-date pen

- call 999 saying 'anaphylaxis' even if your child starts to feel better
- say you think your child has had a severe allergic reaction and that you have given them an adrenaline pen

An out-of-date pen might give your child a lower dose of adrenaline but it's not dangerous and is better than waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

When new stock does arrive, people who have out-of-date pens will be prioritised.

## **If your child weighs more than 25kg**

If your child weighs more than 25kg (four stone), your GP should prescribe a 300mcg adrenaline pen when the pens you have expire.

The pen might say it's for children who weigh more than 30kg but experts have said that during this period of reduced supply it can be used for children who weigh more than 25kg.

## **More useful links**