



# Adrenaline Autoinjectors

## Parent/Caregiver information

Currently, the EpiPen® is the only adrenaline autoinjector in New Zealand. It is designed to be self-administered or given by individuals who are not medically trained in the event of anaphylaxis.

The EpiPen® contains a single fixed dose of adrenaline which relieves the symptoms of anaphylaxis by opening the airways and assisting the heart.

EpiPen® comes in two strengths which is dependent on the weight of your child:

	WEIGHT	STRENGTH
EpiPen® Junior	7.5 to 20 kg	0.15 mg
EpiPen® Adult	Over 20 kg	0.3 mg

## Getting an EpiPen®

Both EpiPen and EpiPen Jr are funded by PHARMAC when an individual has:

- experienced an anaphylactic reaction which has resulted in them going to a hospital/emergency department, or
- been assessed to be at significant risk of anaphylaxis.

They can be prescribed by a doctor or prescribing nurse and the prescription can be taken to any pharmacy, where the EpiPen will be dispensed. There is a limit of two EpiPens or EpiPen Jr, both on the initial prescription and when a further prescription is needed.

Should, the EpiPen expire or be used, a replacement can be obtained in the same way.

Any expired EpiPen should be returned to your Pharmacy for disposal and any used EpiPen, should be given to the ambulance staff or your GP practice for disposal in a sharps container.

## Storing your EpiPen®

It is important to ensure your EpiPen® is accessible at all times and not locked away. It should always be accompanied by your ASCIA Action Plan and asthma medications (if asthmatic). The EpiPen® should be kept between 15-25°C and protected from light, insulated wallets can help with this. It must never be refrigerated.

EpiPen's have a short shelf life of 20 months from their manufacture date. It is important to ensure the EpiPen® is not expired and regularly check that the viewing window shows clear solution (ie. not cloudy, brown or with sediment).

## Further support

**Epiclub** — when you purchase your EpiPen® you can register the device at [www.epiclub.co.nz](http://www.epiclub.co.nz). Epiclub will send you reminders when your EpiPen® is close to expiring.

**Allergy New Zealand** — Allergy NZ is a national charity designed to provide education and support to families who have children with allergy in New Zealand [www.allergy.org.nz](http://www.allergy.org.nz).

**ASCIA** — the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy has many resources available to families such as frequently asked questions [www.allergy.org.au](http://www.allergy.org.au). They also have an online free course in managing allergies <https://anaphylaxis.ascia.org.au>.

**Public Health Nursing Service** — the PHNS provide allergy and anaphylaxis teaching for preschools and schools in Canterbury. It is important that your child's school is educated around your child's allergies and managing these. If your paediatrician or GP hasn't already referred to this service, you can self-refer by phoning 383 6877 ext.99777 or emailing [PHNBurwood@cdhb.health.nz](mailto:PHNBurwood@cdhb.health.nz).