



Treat it.

Severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis)

About **epinephrine**

It is the first-line treatment for anaphylaxis. **Do not use antihistamines, like Benadryl®, as they do not reverse the symptoms of anaphylaxis.** Even if you're unsure about a reaction, **use the epinephrine auto-injector.** Epinephrine is safe and can save a life.



If an anaphylactic reaction happens, follow these **5 emergency steps**:



Image courtesy of Kids' CAP

Give an **epinephrine auto-injector** (e.g. EpiPen®, ALLERJECT®, Emerade™) right away. Follow the instructions on the device.



Call 9-1-1 or your local EMS immediately and tell them a child is having an anaphylactic reaction.



Image courtesy of Kids' CAP

Use a **second auto-injector** as early as 5 minutes after giving the first dose if there is no improvement in symptoms.



Go to the nearest **hospital** right away (ideally by ambulance), even if symptoms are mild or have stopped. The reaction could get worse or come back.



Call **emergency contact** person (e.g. parent).



The allergic reaction is the reason for going to the hospital, not because epinephrine has been used.



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Severe allergic reactions – body position is important

When giving epinephrine

Have a child **sit or lie down**. If having trouble breathing, they may prefer to sit.



You may find it helps to **support or brace their leg** to reduce movement before giving the epinephrine auto-injector.



During a reaction...

If the child is lying down, **do not have them sit up or stand suddenly** during an anaphylactic reaction, even after receiving epinephrine.

Sudden changes of position can be life-threatening.



After giving epinephrine

Place them on their back (if not already lying down) and raise their legs. They may prefer to stay sitting up if breathing is difficult.



If a child feels sick or is vomiting, **place them on their side**. If unconscious, they should also be placed on their side.



After giving epinephrine, it may be helpful to **lie down with a young child** to keep them calm.



Learn more at

foodallergycanada.ca