

NHS advice on using Epi Pens

Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency that requires immediate treatment.

If someone has symptoms of anaphylaxis, you should:

1	Use an adrenalin auto injector if the person has one- but make sure you know how to use it.
2	Call 999 for an ambulance immediately (even if they start to feel better) – tell them that you think the person has anaphylaxis.
3	Remove any trigger if possible- for example, carefully remove any stinger stuck in the skin.
4	Lie the person down flat- unless they're unconscious, pregnant or having breathing difficulties .
5	Give another injection after 5 – 15 minutes if the symptoms do not improve and a second auto injector is available.

If you're having an anaphylactic reaction, you can follow these five steps yourself if you feel able to.

Adrenaline auto-injections

- People with potentially serious allergies are often prescribed adrenaline auto-injectors to carry at all times .These can help stop an anyphylactic reactions becoming threatening.
- They should be used as soon as a serious reaction is suspected, either by the person experiencing anaphlaxis or someone helping them.
- Make sure you're aware of how to use your type of auto injector correctly. And carry two of them at all times.
- There are three main types of adrenaline auto-injector [EpiPen, Jext, Emerade], which are used in slightly different ways.
- Instructions are also included on the side of each injector.

Positioning and resuscitation

Someone experiencing anaphylaxis should be placed in a comfortable position:

- Most people should lie flat
- Pregnant women should lie on their left side to avoid putting too much pressure on the large vein that leads to the heart.
- People havi ng trouble breathing should sit up to help make breathing easier
- People who are unconscious should be placed in the recovery position to ensure the airway remains open and clear- place them on their side, making sure they're supported by one leg and one arm, and open their airway by lifting their chin.
- Avoid a sudden change to an upright posture such as standing or sitting up – this can cause a dangerous fall in blood pressure.

- If the person's breathing or heart stops, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) should be performed immediately.
- You will need to go to hospital for observation- usually for 6-12 hours- as the symptoms can return during this period.

Source and further details: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/ anaphylaxis/treatment](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/treatment).

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