Call 999 if:

- The person's lips, mouth, throat or tongue suddenly become swollen.
- Their breathing becomes very fast or they are struggling to breathe (they may become very wheezy or feel like they are choking or grasping for air)
- Their throat becomes very tight or they are struggling to swallow.
- Their skin, tongue or lips turn blue, grey or pale—if they have brown or black skin, this may be easier to see on the palms of their hands or soles of their feet.
- They suddenly become very confused, drowsy or dizzy.
- They faint and cannot be woken up.
- A child is limp, floppy or not responding like they normally do (their head may fall to the side, backwards or forwards, or they may find it difficult to lift their head or focus on your face).
- The person who is unwell may also have a rash that's swollen, raised or itchy.

These can be signs of a serious allergic reaction and may need immediate treatment in hospital.

EpiPen expiry reminders

For free text or email reminders for when your EpiPen is about to expire,

visit **epipen.co.uk** for a free expiry alert service.

EpiPen Trainer

An EpiPen trainer helps people learn how to appropriately use an EpiPen in the case of an allergic reaction.

They do not contain medication or have a needle and are therefore reusable, meaning you can practice as many times as you like so you can practice yourself as well as have friends, family, carers or colleagues learn how to use an EpiPen.

Epipen trainers should be available from the manufacture of your EpiPen alternatively, they are available to order from epipen.co.uk

References:

https://www.anaphylaxis.org.uk

www.nhs.uk/conditions/anaphylaxis/

www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/your-services/all-services-a-z/paediatrics/managing-anaphylaxis-in-children/

www.epipen.co.uk/en-GB

Riverside Highland Medical Group

EpiPen

Information for patients

What is an EpiPen?

An EpiPen is a brand name for an epinephrine auto-injector.

EpiPens contain a sterile solution of adrenaline to be used in the emergency treatment of sudden, life-threatening allergic reactions, called **anaphylaxis, or anaphylactic shock.**

Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening allergic reaction that happens very quickly.

Anaphylaxis happens when your body has a serious reaction to something you are allergic to.

Allergies that can cause anaphylaxis include:

- **Foods;** such as nuts, cow's milk, eggs, fish or sesame seeds.
- **Medicines;** such as antibiotics.
- **Insect stings**; wasp and bee stings for example.
- **Anaesthetics.**
- **Latex;** a type of rubber found in some gloves and condoms.

Sometimes it is not known what causes an anaphylactic reaction.

Anaphylaxis symptoms can include;

- Itching of the skin.
- Raised rash (like nettle rash).
- Flushing.
- Swelling of the lips, throat, tongue, hands and feet.
- Wheezing.
- Hoarseness.
- Shortness of breath.
- Nausea.
- Vomiting.
- Stomach cramps.
- Loss of consciousness.

How to use your EpiPen

Lie flat (with or without legs elevated), a sitting position may make breathing easier, If pregnant; lie on left side.

- **Remove the Blue safety cap.**

Remember; Blue to the sky, Orange to the thigh

Form a fist around the EpiPen and pull the blue safety cap upwards to remove.

- **Position the Orange tip against the outer mid-thigh.**

- **Jab the Orange tip into the outer thigh**, listen for a click.
- **Hold firmly** in place for **3 seconds** & then remove EpiPen.
- **Dial 999, ask for an ambulance and say "anaphylaxis"** (anna-fill-axis).
- **If there is no improvement in symptoms, or symptoms worsen, after 5 minutes use second EpiPen.**

Check the expiry date on your EpiPens on a regular basis. Ask your GP for replacements at least one month before they expire

Check the EpiPen regularly to make sure the solution is clear and colourless.

If the solution has become discoloured or contains particles it will need to be replaced, even if this occurs before the expiry date.

You must carry two in-date EpiPens at all time; a second dose may be needed if symptoms do not improve after five minutes or get worse.

Practice how to use your EpiPen by using a trainer injector (an injector that has no needle or medicine in it) - you should be able to order these online from the manufacturer of your EpiPen.

Teach friends, family, colleagues or carer on the correct way of how and when to use your EpiPen.

Wear medical alert jewellery such as a bracelet with information about your allergy—this will provide people with essential information in an emergency.

Do not leave your EpiPen anywhere too hot or cold, in the fridge or outside in the sun for example.

Avoid the food, medicine or thing that you are allergic to.

If you have a food allergy; check food labels carefully and tell staff at restaurants and cafes about your allergy.