

15 October 2018

To all patients/users of Junior EpiPen (shared through GPs)

Gateway Publications Reference: 08554

Dear Parent/Guardian,

### **Junior EpiPen® shortage**

As a parent or carer of a child with a severe allergy you might already know about a problem with the supply of EpiPen Junior 150mcg which is expected to last several months. Experts in children's allergies have developed this advice to support you:

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

- It is important you continue to try and avoid the things your child is allergic to as much as possible.
- If your child has a severe allergic or anaphylactic reaction you must always give them their adrenaline pen straight away, call 999, as you would normally and 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. You should note that the expiry date of a pen is the final day of the month listed on the device eg for a November pen, the final date is 30 November.
- Please do not ask for a repeat prescription until the expiry date is nearly reached, as stocks of pens will be kept for those who need them most.

**If you need a replacement Junior EpiPen and have not been able to get one supplied:**

- During this shortage you might be given a device called Jext® or Emerade®.
  - This might say Epinephrine on it 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 and there is a list of websites at the end of this letter which have more information.

- If you have been given a pen that is in-date, but not your usual brand, it is better to use this, than using an out-of-date pen that is your usual brand.
- If your child weighs more than 25kg (4 stone), your GP should prescribe a 300mcg adrenaline pen when the pens you have expire. The pen might say it is 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.
- If your child has a severe allergic or anaphylactic reaction and all the adrenaline pens you have are out-of-date you should **give the out of date pen, then** call 999 saying 'anaphylaxis' even if your child starts to feel better, as you would normally. 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 is not dangerous and is better than waiting for an ambulance to arrive

When new stock does arrive, which we expect to happen in the next week, we will prioritise people who have out-of-date pens.

Yours faithfully



**Dr Aidan Fowler**  
**National Director of Patient Safety**

Below are web links to the videos for other devices:

- EpiPen devices: <http://www.epipen.co.uk/patients/epipenr-user-guide>
- EpiPen Training video: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/4289/rmms>
- EpiPen Junior Training Video: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/4290/rmms>
- Jext devices: <https://jext.co.uk/>
- Jext 150 Training Video: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/5747/rmms>
- Jext 300 Training Video: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/5748/rmms>
- Emerade devices: <https://www.emerade-bausch.co.uk/patient/how-to-use-emerade>
- Emerade 150 Training Video: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/5278/rmms>
- Emerade 300: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/5280/rmms>
- Emerade 500: <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/5279/rmms>