



PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Epinephrine (Systemic)

This information from Lexicomp® explains what you need to know about this medication, including what it's used for, how to take it, its side effects, and when to call your healthcare provider.

Brand Names: US

Adrenalin; Adyphren Amp II [DSC]; Adyphren Amp [DSC]; Adyphren II [DSC]; Adyphren [DSC]; Auvi-Q; Epinephrine Professional; EpinephrineSnap-EMS; Epinephrinesnap-v; EpiPen 2-Pak; EpiPen Jr 2-Pak; EPIsnap; Symjepi

Brand Names: Canada

Adrenalin Chloride; Allerject; Anapen; Anapen Junior; Emerade; EpiPen; EpiPen Jr; TARO-Epinephrine

What is this drug used for?

- It is used to treat a very bad allergic response.
- It is used to treat low blood pressure.
- It is used during eye surgery.
- It is used when the heart is not beating.
- It may be given to you for other reasons. Talk with the doctor.

What do I need to tell my doctor BEFORE I take this drug?

- If you are allergic to this drug; any part of this drug; or any other drugs, foods, or substances. Tell your doctor about the allergy and what signs you had.

This drug may interact with other drugs or health problems.

Tell your doctor and pharmacist about all of your drugs (prescription or OTC, natural products, vitamins) and health problems. You must check to make sure that it is safe for you to take this drug with all of your drugs and health problems. Do not start, stop, or change the dose of any drug without checking with your doctor.

What are some things I need to know or do while I take this drug?

For all uses of this drug:

- Tell all of your health care providers that you take this drug. This includes your doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and dentists.
- Do not give into the fingers, hands, or feet. Doing so may lead to lower blood flow in these areas. If this drug is given on accident, get medical help right away.
- If you are allergic to sulfites, talk with your doctor. Some products have sulfites.
- If you have high blood sugar (diabetes), you will need to watch

your blood sugar closely.

- If you are 65 or older, use this drug with care. You could have more side effects.
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, plan on getting pregnant, or are breast-feeding. You will need to talk about the benefits and risks to you and the baby.

For use in the eye:

- Bright lights may bother you. Wear sunglasses.

What are some side effects that I need to call my doctor about right away?

WARNING/CAUTION: Even though it may be rare, some people may have very bad and sometimes deadly side effects when taking a drug. Tell your doctor or get medical help right away if you have any of the following signs or symptoms that may be related to a very bad side effect:

For all uses of this drug:

- Signs of an allergic reaction, like rash; hives; itching; red, swollen, blistered, or peeling skin with or without fever; wheezing; tightness in the chest or throat; trouble breathing, swallowing, or talking; unusual hoarseness; or swelling of the mouth, face, lips, tongue, or throat.
- Signs of high blood pressure like very bad headache or

dizziness, passing out, or change in eyesight.

- Chest pain or pressure, a fast heartbeat, or an abnormal heartbeat.
- Shortness of breath.
- Not able to pass urine or change in how much urine is passed.

For allergic reasons:

- Rarely, infections have happened where this drug was given. Sometimes, these infections can be very bad. Call your doctor right away if you have signs of an infection like redness that does not go away, warmth, swelling, or tenderness.

Injection (if given in the vein):

- This drug may cause tissue damage if the drug leaks from the vein. Tell your nurse if you have any redness, burning, pain, swelling, blisters, skin sores, or leaking of fluid where the drug is going into your body.

What are some other side effects of this drug?

All drugs may cause side effects. However, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects. Call your doctor or get medical help if any of these side effects or any other side effects bother you or do not go away:

- Feeling dizzy, tired, or weak.

- Feeling nervous and excitable.
- Shakiness.
- Upset stomach or throwing up.
- Anxiety.
- Restlessness.
- Sweating a lot.
- Pale skin.
- Headache.

These are not all of the side effects that may occur. If you have questions about side effects, call your doctor. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to your national health agency.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-332-1088. You may also report side effects at <https://www.fda.gov/medwatch>.

How is this drug best taken?

Use this drug as ordered by your doctor. Read all information given to you. Follow all instructions closely.

For allergic reasons:

- It is given as a shot into a muscle or into the fatty part of the skin.

- Be sure you know how to use before an emergency happens. Read the package insert and instructions for use that come with this drug. If you have any questions about how to use this drug, talk with the doctor or pharmacist.
- Keep this drug with you at all times. You may want to keep extra ones at work, school, and home.
- Someone else may have to give this drug. Be sure others know where this drug is stored and how to give it if needed.
- Never put your fingers or hand over the tip.
- Check the device before you need to use it to make sure the safety release is in place and that the device can be removed from the case. Do not take off the safety release until ready to use.
- When you are ready to use, take the pen out of the case.
- Hold pen with tip down.
- Make a fist around the pen.
- Pull off safety release. Throw away the safety release right after using this drug.
- Jab straight into the outer thigh as you have been told. This drug may be given through clothes if needed. Inject and hold for as long as you were told.
- Do not give into the buttocks.
- If giving this drug to your child, hold the leg still to prevent

injury. Try to limit how much your child moves before and during an injection.

- Get medical help right away after using this drug.
- Put back in the storage case.
- Take it with you to the hospital.
- Do not use this drug if the solution changes color, is cloudy, or has particles. Get a new one.
- If this drug expires, get a new one before a dose is needed.
- If the device has been activated by accident, do not use it for an emergency. Replace the device with a new one.

For other reasons:

- Your doctor will give this drug.

What do I do if I miss a dose?

- Get medical help right away.

How do I store and/or throw out this drug?

Injection (if given in the vein):

- If you need to store this drug at home, talk with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist about how to store it.

All other products:

- Store at room temperature. Do not refrigerate or freeze.

- Protect from heat, cold, and light.

For allergic reasons:

- Store in the case you were given.

All products:

- Keep all drugs in a safe place. Keep all drugs out of the reach of children and pets.
- Throw away unused or expired drugs. Do not flush down a toilet or pour down a drain unless you are told to do so. Check with your pharmacist if you have questions about the best way to throw out drugs. There may be drug take-back programs in your area.

General drug facts

- If your symptoms or health problems do not get better or if they become worse, call your doctor.
- Do not share your drugs with others and do not take anyone else's drugs.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. If you have any questions about this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.
- Some drugs may have another patient information leaflet. Check with your pharmacist. If you have any questions about

this drug, please talk with your doctor, nurse, pharmacist, or other health care provider.

- If you think there has been an overdose, call your poison control center or get medical care right away. Be ready to tell or show what was taken, how much, and when it happened.

Consumer Information Use and Disclaimer

This generalized information is a limited summary of diagnosis, treatment, and/or medication information. It is not meant to be comprehensive and should be used as a tool to help the user understand and/or assess potential diagnostic and treatment options. It does NOT include all information about conditions, treatments, medications, side effects, or risks that may apply to a specific patient. It is not intended to be medical advice or a substitute for the medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of a health care provider based on the health care provider's examination and assessment of a patient's specific and unique circumstances. Patients must speak with a health care provider for complete information about their health, medical questions, and treatment options, including any risks or benefits regarding use of medications. This information does not endorse any treatments or medications as safe, effective, or approved for treating a specific patient. UpToDate, Inc. and its affiliates disclaim any warranty or liability relating to this information or the use thereof. The use of this information is governed by the Terms of Use, available at

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If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

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