

What is an EpiPen

And why would I want to give the school permission

To give my child **epinephrine** in an **emergency**?

EpiPen[®] is an auto-injector that administers epinephrine—and epinephrine is the definitive emergency treatment for severe allergic reactions. These reactions, called anaphylaxis, can become fatal within minutes if untreated. (www.anaphylaxis.com)

Anaphylaxis is a systemic or whole body, allergic reaction that can kill within minutes. The reaction is explosive. Common examples of potentially life threatening allergies are those to foods, such as peanuts, eggs, and shellfish, and stinging insects such as bees, wasps, and fire ants. Life threatening allergic reaction may also occur to medications or latex rubber and in association with exercise.

The most important aspect of management of life-threatening allergies is avoidance but accidental food ingestion and insect stings can occur despite avoidance measures. In the event of contact with the allergen, treatment should be immediately available for these emergency situations.

Epinephrine is the first drug that should be used in the emergency management of a child having a potential life-threatening allergic reaction. Death from anaphylaxis can occur within minutes and the longer the delay in administering epinephrine, the greater the risk of a fatality. Data clearly show that fatalities more often occur away from home and are associated with either not using epinephrine or a delay in the use of epinephrine treatment. (American Lung Association, www.Lungaction.org)