



NEWS RELEASE

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

RSA Tower 201 Monroe Street, Suite 914 Montgomery, AL 36104

Phone 334-206-5300 Fax 334-206-5520

www.adph.org

New Alabama law allows more people to administer life-saving epinephrine to people with severe allergic reactions

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Valerie Cochran

(334) 206-5226

A new Alabama law allows members of the public to have access to single-dose epinephrine auto-injectors so they can intervene should another person have a severe allergic reaction due to anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that can be caused by insect stings, foods such as nuts, or medication. If a person is allergic, symptoms of anaphylaxis may appear within a few minutes to a few hours after contact with the allergen.

Early symptoms may include wheezing, throat tightness, hives and/or itching. Immediate medical treatment may be needed, including an injection of epinephrine. Epinephrine auto-injectors (sometimes called epi pens) are a fast and convenient way for this medication to be administered to someone experiencing an anaphylactic reaction.

People who experience a severe allergic reaction should also go to the emergency room even if they improve after epinephrine is injected. Those who may require the use of an auto-injector should make sure that friends, coworkers, and family members know where it is kept and how to use it.

Under Act #2016-193, individuals and organizations such as camps, colleges and universities, child cares, youth sports leagues, amusement parks, restaurants, places of employment, and sports arenas may keep and use an auto-injector with limited or no liability. A prescription from a physician is required for purchase.

The Alabama Department of Public Health is providing online training for individuals who would like to be prepared to administer epinephrine. This 16-minute training video stresses the importance of prompt treatment and demonstrates the proper use of epinephrine auto-injectors.

It is available at <http://www.adph.org/nursing/Default.asp?id=7561>. In addition, the site directs those who have been trained to download a certificate of completion. Participants who have used an auto-injector should return to this website and complete a report to help collect data that can be used to educate other users.

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