



EMS Information Bulletin- #2

DATE: August 13, 2003

SUBJECT: Epinephrine Auto-Injector Administration by EMTs

TO: Ambulance Services
Quick Response Services

FROM: Emergency Medical Services Office
(717) 787-8740

Epinephrine is a sympathomimetic drug indicated in the emergency treatment of allergic reactions from insect stings or bites, foods, drugs, other allergens and idiopathic anaphylaxis. EMTs are authorized under regulations promulgated by the Department to assist a patient to administer drugs previously prescribed for the patient, as specified by the Statewide BLS treatment protocols. Those protocols permit EMTs to assist patients with the administration of epinephrine by auto-injector when the patient is carrying his or her own prescribed epinephrine.

The Statewide BLS protocols are written to permit an EMT with appropriate training, when functioning with an ambulance service or QRS that meets the requirements to carry epinephrine auto-injectors, and with the approval of the ambulance service or quick response service (QRS) medical director, to use an epinephrine auto-injector to administer epinephrine via subcutaneous or intramuscular routes in accordance with those protocols or medical command orders.

EMTs may only administer epinephrine by auto-injector when following the most current statewide BLS protocol or when directly ordered by a medical command physician. The most up-to-date version of the statewide BLS protocol related to epinephrine auto-injectors will supercede any other guidelines related to the administration of epinephrine auto-injectors.

Service Requirements

The following are requirements for ambulance services and QRS related to the use of epinephrine auto-injectors prior to implementation by the service:

1. The identification of a medical director willing to serve in an oversight capacity in regards to epinephrine auto-injectors.
2. Ability to comply with manufacturers' recommendations for storage and maintenance:
 - a. Store in a dark place at room temperature (59-86 degrees F).
 - b. Do NOT refrigerate.

- c. Do NOT expose to extreme cold or heat.
 - d. Note expiration date on the unit (month and year). Replace before expiration date.
 - e. Examine contents in clear window of the auto-injector monthly.
 - f. Replace the unit if the solution is discolored or contains solid particles (precipitate).
 - g. Protect from prolonged exposure to UV rays.
3. Maintain a supply of two (2) each of adult and pediatric dose epinephrine auto-injectors with the required equipment for the ambulance service or QRS.

Practitioner Requirements

The following are requirements related to the use of epinephrine auto-injectors as it relates to the individual EMT scope of practice:

1. The skill may only be used when an EMT is functioning with an ambulance service or QRS that complies with Department requirements for carrying epinephrine auto-injectors.
2. Only an EMT that has completed the training in the primary use (not patient-assisted) epinephrine auto-injector module through the EMT curriculum or continuing education course # 004124 may use an epinephrine auto-injector.
3. The EMT must be authorized to perform this skill by the ambulance service or QRS medical director for epinephrine auto-injectors.

Ambulance services and QRSs who wish to carry epinephrine auto-injectors, including EMTs who wish to administer them, must contact their regional EMS council for additional information prior to implementation of primary use epinephrine auto-injectors.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
Epinephrine Auto-Injector
Requirements and Recommendations for BLS Services

GOAL: To reduce morbidity and mortality rates due to anaphylaxis through the primary use of a epinephrine auto-injectors by emergency medical technicians (EMTs) through collaborative relationships with regional EMS councils, local EMS agencies, and the PA Department of Health (Department).

AUTHORITY:

EMTs are authorized under regulations promulgated by the Department to assist a patient to administer drugs previously prescribed for the patient, as specified by the Statewide BLS treatment protocols. Those protocols permit EMTs to assist patients with the administration of epinephrine by auto-injector when the patient is carrying his or her own prescribed epinephrine.

The Statewide BLS protocols are written to permit an EMT with appropriate training, when functioning with an ambulance service or QRS that is recognized by the Department to carry epinephrine auto-injectors, and with the approval of the ambulance service or quick response service (QRS) medical director, to use an epinephrine auto-injector to administer epinephrine via subcutaneous or intramuscular routes in accordance with those protocols or medical command orders. The Department, pursuant to its responsibility under the EMS Act (35 P.S. § 6924) to guide and coordinate the development of emergency medical programs into a unified Statewide system and recognizing the importance of epinephrine auto-injectors to an effective emergency medical services system, has, through the Emergency Medical Services Office, drafted the following requirements and recommendations for ambulance services and QRSs that wish to carry and use epinephrine auto-injectors.

All aspects of the requirements are subject to inspection by the regional EMS council during scheduled or unscheduled inspections of a service that decides to carry and use epinephrine auto-injectors.

QRS AND AMBULANCE SERVICE RECOGNITION:

Ambulance services and QRSs that demonstrate compliance with these requirements will be permitted to carry epinephrine auto-injectors, and through their medical director, authorize qualified EMTs to use an epinephrine auto-injector to administer epinephrine via subcutaneous or intramuscular routes in accordance with the Department's regulations and the Statewide medical treatment protocols or medical command orders.

A. SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

1. Ambulance services and QRSs carrying epinephrine auto-injectors must:

- a. Be recommended by the regional EMS council to the Department for approval to carry epinephrine auto-injectors.**
- b. Have a medical director who is willing to serve in an oversight capacity for the service's use of epinephrine auto-injectors.**
- c. Ensure that authorized EMTs are trained in the proper module (course # 004124) for primary use of epinephrine auto-injectors. NOTE: The current EMT basic curriculum includes a patient-assisted module that is not as comprehensive and does not contain the objectives or skill verification requirements outlined in course # 004124.**
- d. Ensure reporting of device usage via the State- approved EMS patient care report (PCR).**
- e. Participate in a quality assurance program, as defined by the regional EMS council.**
- f. Maintain a quantity of two (2) each of adult (0.3 mg/0.3 mL of 1:1000 solution) and pediatric (0.15 mg/0.3 mL of 1:2000 solution) dose epinephrine auto-injectors with the required equipment for the ambulance service or QRS.**
- g. Maintain a monthly inspection log to verify that a visual examination of each epinephrine auto-injector has been accomplished.**

SAMPLE OF INSPECTION LOG:

Lot no:	Current expiration date:
Month/year:	Checked by:
Aug 03	
Sept 03	
Oct 03	
Nov 03	

- h. Maintain a roster of EMTs authorized for primary use of epinephrine auto-injectors.**
- i. Maintain a proper sharps disposal unit. NOTE: Sharps disposal containers should be of sufficient thickness or construction design to be durable, leak resistant, and puncture resistant under normal use and stresses imposed during storage, handling, installation, use, closure, and transport by the user before final disposal.**
- j. Comply with manufacturers care and storage requirements for epinephrine auto-injectors:**
 - Store in a dark place at room temperature (59-86 degrees F).**
 - Do NOT refrigerate.**
 - Do NOT expose to extreme cold or heat.**
 - Note expiration date on the unit (month and year). Replace before expiration date.**
 - Examine contents in clear window of the auto-injector monthly.**

- **Replace the unit if the solution is discolored or contains solid particles (precipitate).**
 - **Protect from prolonged exposure to UV rays.**
- k. Ensure that qualified EMTs have access to contact information for local medical command facilities.**

B. PERSONNEL

1. Medical Director

NOTE: BLS services may have one medical director who functions as a BLS service medical director or a physician who serves to provide oversight for the use of epinephrine auto-injectors only. The following requirements pertain to the oversight function of epinephrine auto-injectors.

REQUIRED:

- a. MD/DO with currently registered license to practice in Pennsylvania**

RECOMMENDED:

- a. Board certified in emergency medicine or ACLS provider**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Verify that the BLS service meets epinephrine auto-injector training requirements.**
- b. Oversee all quality assurance requirements.**
- c. Authorize EMTs for primary use of epinephrine auto-injectors and review the service's roster of authorized EMTs.**
- d. Identify skill maintenance requirements.**
- e. QA review of EVERY case of epinephrine auto-injector use by an EMT.**

2. EMT authorized to administer epinephrine auto-injector

REQUIRED:

- a. EMT certification.**
- b. Successfully complete Department approved CE course # 004124 related to primary use of epinephrine auto-injectors.**
- c. Authorized by the service's medical director for epinephrine auto-injectors.**

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- a. Follows current statewide BLS treatment protocols in the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector.**
- b. Adheres to skill maintenance requirements established by the medical director.**
- c. Complete EMS patient care report (PCR) and forward to the medical director for review. In addition to the usual documentation requirements for PCRs, authorized EMTs shall include the following information related to the use of epinephrine auto-injectors:**
 - **Documentation of appropriate indication for use**
 - **Documentation of adverse events**

- **Documentation of dosage, route and response**
- **Documentation of repeat assessments and treatment of adverse outcomes**
- **Medical command physician contact (including actual contact or attempts to contact and physician orders.)**

C. REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL

- 1. Ensure that BLS services wishing to carry and use epinephrine auto-injectors comply with service and personnel requirements prescribed by the Department.**
- 2. Recommend BLS services to the Department for approval to carry and use epinephrine auto-injectors.**

Note: Although a single manufacturer currently provides epinephrine auto-injectors under the brand name of EpiPen®, the Department does not endorse or approve any particular device.