



Anaphylaxis
Campaign

Supporting people at risk of severe allergies

Preparing for and Managing Your Allergies at University

A Guide for University Students

www.anaphylaxis.org.uk

Who are we?



Supporting people at risk of severe allergies

The Anaphylaxis Campaign is the only UK wide charity solely focused on supporting people at risk of severe allergic reactions. We empower people living with severe allergies to be more confidently in control of their lives.

www.anaphylaxis.org.uk



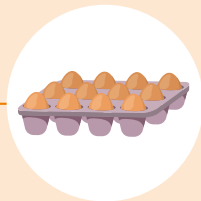
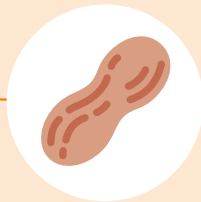
What is Anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis (pronounced ana-fill-ax-is) is a severe and life-threatening allergic reaction that can be fatal. Severe symptoms such as a swollen tongue, difficulty breathing or becoming unconscious usually develop suddenly, often within minutes after being exposed to an allergy trigger such as a particular food, latex, insect stings or certain drugs. There's no cure for anaphylaxis, so people at risk have two options: manage their condition and carry adrenaline, a life-saving emergency medication.

The Anaphylaxis Campaign has identified that 16-24-year olds are in a high-risk group when it comes to managing their allergies. Having had parents to support them manage their allergies they now face having to do this alone. They are often reluctant to share information about their allergies, they often resist carrying their Adrenaline Auto Injectors (AAI's) and may experiment with foods they are allergic to.

Common UK Allergens include:

- Food allergies: peanuts, Tree Nuts, Sesame, Shellfish, Milk and Eggs
- Grass and tree pollen
- Insect stings
- Latex
- Dust mites, Moulds and Animal dander
- Medication – including ibuprofen, aspirin, and certain antibiotics



Things to consider when thinking about going to University

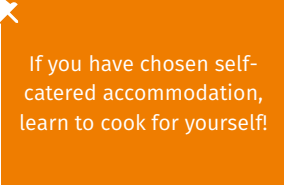
- When looking round universities at their open days, discuss with staff about your allergies and what procedures and policies they have in place to help you manage your allergies.
- Review shared housing options. Most universities have both catered and self-catered accommodation. Self-catered accommodation may be a safer option as you can control what food you eat. However, choose what feels best for you.




Once your University place has been confirmed

Congratulations! You're going to University!

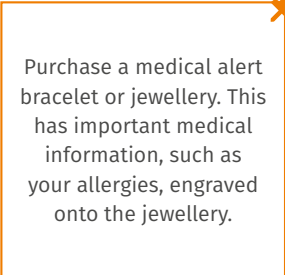
Please see our top tips below on how to prepare for university in terms of your allergies.



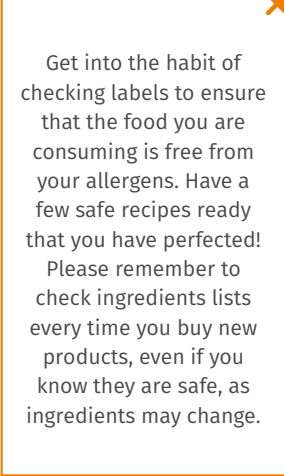
If you have chosen self-catered accommodation, learn to cook for yourself!



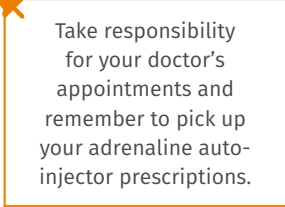
Some universities may provide you with a mini fridge for your room to keep your food safe and free from cross contamination.



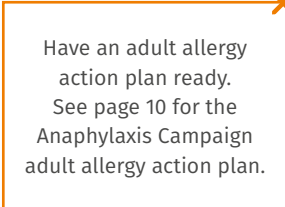
Purchase a medical alert bracelet or jewellery. This has important medical information, such as your allergies, engraved onto the jewellery.



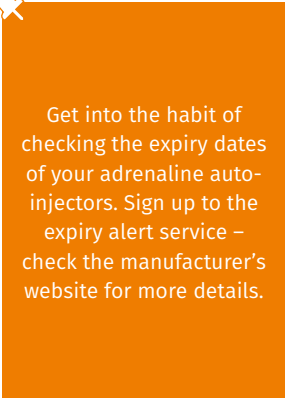
Get into the habit of checking labels to ensure that the food you are consuming is free from your allergens. Have a few safe recipes ready that you have perfected! Please remember to check ingredients lists every time you buy new products, even if you know they are safe, as ingredients may change.



Take responsibility for your doctor's appointments and remember to pick up your adrenaline auto-injector prescriptions.



Have an adult allergy action plan ready. See page 10 for the Anaphylaxis Campaign adult allergy action plan.



Get into the habit of checking the expiry dates of your adrenaline auto-injectors. Sign up to the expiry alert service – check the manufacturer's website for more details.

Starting University

Starting university can be a daunting time for anyone, but especially for someone who has severe allergies. Below are a few ideas of what to consider when starting university.

Tell your housemates and friends about your allergies, what to do in the event of a severe allergic reaction, and how to use your adrenaline device. You can order trainer pens to show them more easily.

Download the app connected with your adrenaline auto-injector and ask housemates and friends to do the same. This means that everyone has information on how to use the adrenaline auto-injector and many other helpful tips at the touch of a button.

Speak to accommodation services, your personal tutor, catering staff (if in catered accommodation) and any other relevant university staff, about your allergies and requirements.

Label your allergen-free food and utensils to reduce the risk of cross-contamination.

Put up a poster on what to do in an emergency in your shared accommodation kitchen. Please visit www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/information-training/our-posters/

Ensure that you carry your adrenaline auto-injectors with you **at all times** and let the people you are with know where to find them.

Sign up to the university medical centre and book an appointment to discuss your allergies.

Eating Out



Before You Eat Out

- Check the restaurant's menu beforehand, if possible
- Be aware of styles of food that traditionally contain your allergen
- Make sure those going to the restaurant with you know about your allergies
- Don't assume a certain meal will be okay
- Call ahead – ask the restaurant if they can cater for you

The Law

The European Union Food Information for Consumers Regulation came into force on 13th December 2014. Information on any of the 14 allergens used as ingredients will need to be provided for foods sold without packaging or wrapped on site, either verbally by a member of staff or written down, such as on a chalkboard.

When at the Restaurant, Remember to Ask the Questions

- ✓ I have an allergy to X, can you cater for this?
- 👁️ Can I see the allergen information?
- 👨🍳 Can I, or can you, speak to the chef about how my meal is prepared?
- 📋 How is cross-contamination of my allergen prevented?
- ✍️ Can you make a note about my allergy on my order?
- ✂️ Can you confirm this meal is free from my allergen?

Find More Information on Eating Out ,
visit www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/living-with-anaphylaxis/a-guide-to-eating-out/

Top Tips for Managing your Allergies during University

Alcohol and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (e.g. ibuprofen) can increase the severity of an allergic reaction.

Recreational drugs and alcohol may affect judgement so early signs of a reaction may not be spotted and appropriate action not taken in time.

Latex and milk can be found in many brands of condoms, which will be an issue if you have a latex and/or milk allergy. There are many non-latex or milk free condoms available, just ask the manufacturer's advice on which allergens may be used in production.

Kissing - allergens can remain in the saliva for several hours –anywhere between 2 and 24 hours and even brushing teeth before kissing may not get rid of them effectively. If you have an allergy, always check with the other person if they have eaten food you may be allergic to.

Ensure that you are storing your adrenaline auto-injectors correctly. Keep your adrenaline auto-injectors in their original containers to prevent light exposure, do not store above 25°C and do not freeze.

If you're suffering from an illness, or have just recovered from one, this can put you at an increased risk of a severe allergic reaction.

Check regularly, through the viewing window on your adrenaline auto-injectors, that the solution is clear and colourless.

EpiPens have an additional instruction to not refrigerate the device. Keep in mind that domestic fridges can sometimes freeze medications. Also try to not put your bag with your adrenaline auto-injectors near radiators.

Stock up on cleaning supplies, allergy-proof pillow and mattress casings to protect yourself from dust mites if you have a dust mite allergy. Wash the pillow and mattress casings frequently.

Being fully responsible for your allergies, perhaps for the first time in your life can be daunting. Given the fact that anaphylaxis can be serious and unpredictable can place a heavy burden on those affected, and the constant vigilance required and the possibility of being in a life-threatening situation means there is often intense anxiety associated with many daily activities. Our 'Psychological Impact of Anaphylaxis' factsheet outlines the potential psychological effects of anaphylaxis and offers advice and coping strategies. This can be viewed on our website.

Many people with severe allergies have asthma. Smoking is likely to make asthma worse and poorly controlled asthma can make severe allergies much more dangerous.

Sleepless nights and stress brought on by a looming deadline can significantly increase your vulnerability to a severe allergic reaction, so be mindful.

Mould in student accommodation can be an issue for those suffering with a mould allergy. If you are and have mould in your room, talk to your landlord or accommodation services to get this removed. To prevent mould forming, avoid drying clothes indoors, be aware of indoor plants, and open windows regularly to keep your room dry and well-ventilated.

Set an alarm on your phone to remind you in the morning to take your adrenaline auto-injectors with you in your bag or on your person.

Shared desks in the library can harbour allergens. Use wet wipes to clear away any inconspicuous crumbs and spills.

Placements abroad can be an exciting opportunity but can present more issues for your allergies. See our travel pages on our website for some helpful tips and advice at www.anaphylaxis.org.uk/living-with-anaphylaxis/travelling/

Allergy Action Plan

Develop an Allergy Alert Plan and share this with your friends and housemates

.....
is allergic to the following
.....

Emergency Contact details
Next of kin.....
Contact number.....

Please note: The Human Medicines Regulations 2012 states that any lay person can administer adrenaline for the purpose of saving a life

- Mild to Moderate Symptoms**
- Swollen lips, face or eyes
 - Itchy / tingling mouth
 - Hives or itchy skin rash
 - Abdominal pain or vomiting
 - Sudden change in behaviour

- ACTION:**
- Stay with the your friend
 - Call for help if necessary
 - Locate adrenaline autoinjector(s)
 - Give antihistamine
 - Phone your friends emergency contact

Watch for signs of ANAPHYLAXIS (life-threatening allergic reaction)
Anaphylaxis may occur without skin symptoms
Always consider Anaphylaxis in someone who has food allergies and stops breathing

- Think A B C**
- AIRWAY:** Persistent cough, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing, swollen tongue
- BREATHING:** Difficult or noisy breathing, wheeze or persistent cough
- CONSCIOUSNESS:** Persistent dizziness / pale or floppy, suddenly sleepy, collapse, unconscious

- If ANY ONE (or more) of these signs are present:**
- Administer Adrenaline Autoinjector without delay.
- Lie the adult flat: (if breathing is difficult, allow the adult to sit) Dial 999 for ambulance and say ANAPHYLAXIS (“ANA-FIL-AX-IS”)
- IF IN DOUBT, administer the Adrenaline Autoinjector**
- After giving Adrenaline:**
1. Stay with adult until ambulance arrives, do NOT sit them up
 2. Commence CPR if there are no signs of life
 3. Phone emergency contact
 4. If no improvement after 5 minutes, give a 2nd adrenaline dose using a second Adrenaline Autoinjector device, if available

- Adrenaline Auto Injector**
- There are three different brands of Adrenaline Auto Injectors in the UK
- Jext
 - EpiPen
 - Emerade
- How to administer each device varies by brand, please follow the instructions on the device

AllergyWise

AllergyWise is the easiest way to learn about anaphylaxis, the risks of severe allergies and how to manage them, conveniently from your home or at university, wherever and whenever it suits you.

Our free and accredited online AllergyWise e-learning courses are the perfect way to learn how to manage living with allergies in day-to-day life, recognise the signs and symptoms of a severe allergic reaction and know what to do in an emergency.

Website: www.allergywise.org.uk

Email: allergywise@anaphylaxis.org.uk

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General Enquiries

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Helpline and Information Team

Our national helpline is available from Monday-Friday between 9am-5pm.

Tel: +44 (0) 1252 542029

Email:

info@anaphylaxis.org.uk

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What to do in an emergency



As soon as a severe reaction is suspected, an adrenaline injection must be administered.



The person should remain as still as possible. Ideally, they should be lying down and if they are feeling weak, dizzy or appear pale and sweating, their legs should be raised.



Call 999. Say the person is suffering from anaphylaxis (anna-fill-axis). Give clear and precise directions to the operator, including your postcode.



Make a note of the time adrenaline was given. If there is no improvement, a second dose can be given after 5 minutes.



If the person deteriorates after making the initial 999 call, make a second call to ensure an ambulance has been dispatched.



Send someone outside to direct the ambulance crew.



Try to ascertain what food or substance caused the reaction and ensure the ambulance crew knows this.



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