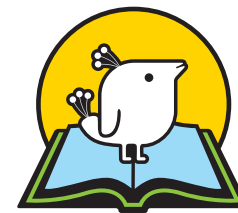


Anaphylaxis^{1,2}



TREATING ALLERGIES
THROUGH EDUCATION

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EFFECTIVE AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE

Most cases of anaphylaxis occur when a person with a severe allergy is exposed to the allergen they are allergic to (usually a food, insect or medication). As anaphylaxis is potentially life threatening, it should always be treated as a medical emergency, requiring immediate treatment.

Signs and Symptoms:

In some cases, anaphylaxis is preceded by signs of a mild to moderate allergic reaction:

- Swelling of face, lips and eyes
- Hives or welts on the skin
- Tingling mouth
- **Stomach pain**, vomiting (*these are signs of a mild to moderate allergic reaction to most allergens, however, in insect allergy these are signs of anaphylaxis*).

Immediate Action:

- For insect allergy, **remove the sting** if it can be seen (*but do not remove ticks*).
- Stay with person and **call for help**.
- **Give medications if prescribed**. (*Antihistamines may be used to treat mild to moderate allergic reactions, but if these progress to anaphylaxis then adrenaline should be administered*).
- If there is a history of anaphylaxis, ensure an **adrenaline auto-injector is always available**. It is advisable to store instruction on how to use the auto-injector with the adrenaline auto-injector.
- Locate adrenaline auto-injector if available (*see instruction on use below*).
- Contact parent/guardian or other emergency contact.

In cases of severe allergic reactions, continue to watch for any one of the following signs of anaphylaxis:

- **Difficult/noisy breathing**
- Swelling of tongue
- **Swelling/tightness in throat**
- **Difficulty talking** and/or hoarse voice
- Wheeze or **persistent cough**
- Persistent dizziness or **collapse**
- Pale and floppy (*in young children*).

Action in case of anaphylaxis:

- Lay person flat – allow them to sit if breathing is difficult but do not stand.
- Give the adrenaline auto-injector if available.
- Call Ambulance.
- Contact parent/guardian or other emergency contact.

Important: If in doubt, give the adrenaline auto-injector. Withholding or delaying the giving of adrenaline can result in deterioration and death.

How to use an adrenaline auto-injector like EpiPen®:

- It is important to note that the needle releases adrenaline when it is jabbed against the outer thigh.
- The injector should only be placed firmly into the muscle of the outer thigh, firstly because adrenaline (*epinephrine*) cannot move through fat and secondly because it can cause dangerous side effects if injected into a vein or artery.
- It is the responsibility of parents to make sure that teachers know how to use the auto-injector. It is advised to supply them with a copy of the manufacturer's instructions that come with the auto-injector to ensure they know how to administer adrenaline in an emergency situation.
- Injections can be given through clothing, and the syringe should be held in place for 10 seconds after injecting.
- Most people should experience a rapid improvement in symptoms once the adrenaline has been used, but a second dose may be necessary if there is no improvement after five minutes. This should be injected into the opposite leg.