



Anaphylaxis

In School



What is Anaphylaxis?

- potentially life-threatening allergic reaction
- triggers include food, medication, insect venom, or latex.
- Anaphylactic symptoms may include difficulty breathing or swallowing, hives, or swelling around the mouth or eyes.
- Anaphylaxis may be successfully treated with epinephrine.



Definition

- allergic reaction that can be fatal within minutes, either through swelling that shuts off airways or through a dramatic drop in blood pressure.
- occurs in individuals when they are exposed to an allergen to which they are allergic.
- An allergen is almost always a protein that is treated by the immune system as a foreign substance.
- chain reaction in a person's immune system that may lead to swelling of the airways, loss of blood pressure, and loss of consciousness, resulting in anaphylactic shock.



Definition continued

- Some anaphylactic reactions involve only one organ system, such as the respiratory tract or skin. However, in anaphylaxis, multiple systems are usually affected simultaneously.
- effective treatment is available, so death from anaphylaxis can be prevented in most cases.
- deaths occur every day because the symptoms of anaphylaxis go unrecognized or because treatment is not prompt enough.



Distinctive Symptoms

- Hives
- Swelling of the throat, lips, tongue, or around the eyes
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing



Other common symptoms

- Metallic taste or itching in the mouth
- Generalized flushing, itching, or redness of the skin
- Abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Increased heart rate
- Sudden decrease in blood pressure (and accompanying paleness)
- Sudden feeling of weakness
- Anxiety or an overwhelming sense of doom
- Collapse
- Loss of consciousness



Action

Importance of carrying and using epinephrine

- In one study of children and adolescents, 10 out of 13 fatal or near fatal anaphylactic reactions occurred outside of the home.
- None of the fatalities had epinephrine with them; all of the non-fatalities received epinephrine before or within 5 minutes of developing severe symptoms.



Action continued

Speed of potentially fatal anaphylaxis

- It takes only 1 to 2 minutes for a mild allergic reaction to escalate to anaphylaxis.
- The faster the onset of an anaphylactic reaction, the greater the likelihood that it will be severe.



Possible Symptoms Again

- Generalised itching of tongue
- Swelling of lips
- Tickly throat
- Difficulty in breathing
- Nausea



Treatment

Do not wait for all of the above symptoms.

EPIPEN MUST BE ADMINISTERED.

- Upright position/recovery position (left side)
- Inject in the thigh (through clothing if necessary)
- NB: Note and record **time** of injection.
- Keep EpiPen safe for ambulance staff.



Treatment continued

Other staff members roles:

- Telephone ambulance services: stating **ANAPHYLACTIC REACTION**
- Alert school nurse/ head teacher/ student's teacher.
- Call parents
- Support primary caregiver
- Crowd control



Treatment continued

- Stay with student, observe closely.
- No improvement/deterioration after 5-10 minutes:
2nd Epipen must be administered
(preferably other leg)
- Note time given.
- Keep epipens safe.



Treatment cont'd

Administration of this medication is safe even if given through misdiagnosis.

- On arrival of ambulance staff, staff in charge will advise of medication and time given.
- Used Epipens given to medical staff
- Debriefing of staff.
- School Nurse to be informed of incident.
- Parents replace any used medication ASAP.



EPIPEN?

- Location : Office, Individual Prescribed Medication Should Be with Student Medication
- Must be taken on school outings for individual student prescription.
- Good communication between staff and parents.



Questions?