

Anaphylaxis Identification and Management

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that happens rapidly after exposure to a trigger, causing the body's immune system to constrict airways and drop blood pressure leading to breathing difficulties, swelling and shock.

The most common causes of anaphylaxis are medication, food and insect venom.
Medications are the most common cause of anaphylaxis in older adults, with an increased risk of severe or fatal anaphylaxis in individuals with underlying asthma and/or cardiovascular disease.

Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency requiring immediate treatment with adrenaline.

All residents who have experienced an anaphylactic reaction and have continuing risk of exposure to an allergen trigger should have a personalised emergency action plan and be prescribed an adrenaline autoinjector.

Clinical Presentation of Anaphylaxis

Any acute onset of hypotension or bronchospasm or upper airway obstruction where anaphylaxis is considered possible, **even if typical skin features are not present.** **OR** Any acute onset of illness with typical skin features (urticarial rash or erythema/flushing and/or angioedema). **PLUS** Involvement of respiratory, cardiovascular or persistent severe gastrointestinal symptoms.

Acute Anaphylaxis Management

Prompt Recognition


Symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction:


- Difficult with or noisy breathing.
- Swelling of the tongue.
- Swelling or tightness in the throat.
- Difficulty talking or hoarse voice, wheeze or persistent cough.
- Persistent dizziness, feeling faint or collapse.
- Becoming pale and floppy (infants or young children).
- Abdominal pain, vomiting,

To watch a short video, click [here](#)

Correctly Position Patient

A patient experiencing anaphylaxis is laid flat or allowed to sit with legs extended if breathing is difficult.





Be Prepared: [The ASCIA Anaphylaxis Training Refresher](#) video is free and can be watched anytime by anyone 

If in doubt, give adrenaline device

Commence CPR any time if person is unresponsive and not breathing

ALWAYS give adrenaline device FIRST, if someone has SEVERE AND SUDDEN BREATHING DIFFICULTY (including wheeze, persistent cough or hoarse voice), even if there are no skin symptoms. THEN SEEK MEDICAL HELP.

Be Prepared: The ASCIA website - '[How to give adrenaline \(epinephrine\) devices](#)' provides instructions 

 For urgent assistance, **call 000**