

Managing Anaphylaxis

The best way to treat a known hypersensitivity is strict avoidance of the allergen. This means reading labels and even involving a dietician and doctor to go over the foods that can and can't be eaten. People with a known hypersensitivity, especially to peanuts should be especially wary of foods where the ingredients are not known. Regular review with a family doctor should be undertaken to monitor for changes to hypersensitivity – some food hypersensitivities can resolve over time if the body has time to recover from the problem.

If the casualty has a known hypersensitivity and is experiencing severe symptoms, then the best treatment is the use of an Epipen® IMMEDIATELY. A definite indication for this is if the casualty has a known previous anaphylactic response to the allergen. There are different colour Epipens® for adults and children

Adults = Yellow

Children = Green



An Epipen® is NOT indicated on a casualty who has no previous anaphylactic reaction and is experiencing

- Mild systemic reactions, or
- Local reactions

Managing Mild - Moderate Allergic Reactions

- For insect allergy, flick out the sting if it can be seen (but do not remove ticks)
- Stay with person and call for help
- Give medications if prescribed (whilst non-drowsy antihistamines may be used to treat mild to moderate allergic reactions, if these progress to anaphylaxis then adrenaline is the only suitable medication)
- Locate adrenaline auto injector if available (instructions are included in the ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis which should be stored with the adrenaline autoinjector)
- Contact parent/guardian or other emergency contact

There is no requirement to administer adrenaline until one or more signs of severe anaphylaxis are shown. However, if you are unsure, it is better to administer adrenaline if required

Managing Severe / Anaphylaxis Reactions

- Lay person flat (if breathing is difficult, allow to sit). Do not allow them to stand or walk
- Give the adrenaline autoinjector (refer How To Use and Epipen® below)
- Call Ambulance (Call 000 or 112)
- Call emergency contact as indicated on personal action plan
- Provide further adrenaline doses if no response after 5 minutes (when additional adrenaline auto-injectors are available)
- Keep casualty calm through reassurance
- Monitor casualty using basic First Aid Principles (DRABCD)
- Stay with casualty until ambulance arrives
- Commence CPR at any time if the person becomes unresponsive and not breathing normally
- In event that the casualty has no response after 5 minutes, administer second dose (if adrenaline auto-injector is available)