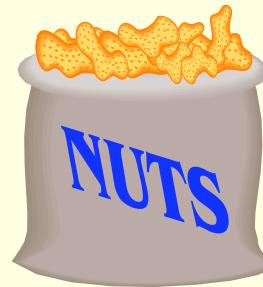




Anaphylaxis

Understanding anaphylaxis and the proper use of emergency epinephrine



Allergic Response

- When an individual's immune system identifies a trigger or allergen, it will attempt to protect the body by creating chemicals called antibodies.
- These antibodies will cause symptoms ranging from a mild, localized reaction to a more severe systemic reaction.

What is anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a collection of symptoms affecting multiple body systems. The symptoms are typically more severe and rapidly occurring. Most dangerous include breathing difficulties, a drop in blood pressure, shock, even death.

Anaphylaxis

■ Prevalence

- It is estimated that 17.2 million Americans have a severe allergy to latex, insect stings, and or foods.

Triggers

■ Common triggers:

- Foods- peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, fish, milk and eggs.
- Insect stings- wasps, bees, yellow jackets, and fire ants.
- Latex- found in rubber gloves, elastic bands, balloons, and certain medical supplies.
- Medications-commonly include antibiotics, muscle relaxants, aspirin and others.

Identification and Treatment

- The sooner the signs of an allergic reaction are recognized the faster treatment can begin.
- Signs of a reaction can occur within minutes or may not appear until hours later.

Common Signs

- Skin: tingling sensation, itching, or hives
- Mouth: itching and swelling of the lips, tongue or mouth
- Throat: itching and/or a sense of tightness in the throat, hoarseness, and hacking cough
- Respiratory: wheezing, or difficulty breathing
- Gastrointestinal: vomiting, diarrhea or cramping
- Loss of consciousness due to a drop in blood pressure

**Remember...the severity of symptoms
can change quickly!**

Treatment

- Treatment plans can range from removal of the allergen, (such as with skin washing), to oral antihistamines and/or emergency epinephrine depending on the intensity of the reaction.
- Two common sources of emergency epinephrine are the Epi-Pen auto injector and the Twinject auto injector.
- It is important for individuals with potentially life threatening allergies to work with their health care provider to develop an individualized plan of treatment.

Action Plan

- If emergency epinephrine is prescribed, the health care provider will train the student and family in the proper self-administration of the medication.

- However, in the event of a serious allergic reaction, the student may become nervous and anxious and require the assistance of an adult.

Proper Use of an Epi-Pen

- The manufacturers of the Epi-Pen auto injector have created helpful patient instructions describing the proper use of the EpiPen. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with these instructions.

Directions for Use



1. Unscrew the yellow or green cap off of the EpiPen® or EpiPen® Jr carrying case and remove the EpiPen® or EpiPen® Jr auto-injector from its storage tube.
2. Grasp unit with the black tip pointing downward.
3. Form fist around the unit (black tip down).
4. With your other hand, pull off the gray safety release.
5. Hold black tip near outer thigh.

Directions for use



6. Jab EpiPen firmly into outer thigh until it clicks so that unit is perpendicular (at a 90° angle) to the thigh. (Auto-injector is designed to work through clothing.)
7. Hold **firmly against thigh** for approximately 10 seconds.
(The injection is now complete. Window on auto-injector will show red.)
8. Remove unit from thigh and massage injection area for 10 seconds.
9. Call 911 and seek immediate medical attention.
10. Carefully place the used auto-injector (without bending the needle), needle-end first, into the storage tube of the carrying case that provides built-in needle protection after use. Then screw the cap of the storage tube back on completely, and take it with you to the hospital emergency room.

Directions for use



- ***NEVER PUT THUMB, FINGERS, OR HAND OVER BLACK TIP.***
- ***DO NOT REMOVE GRAY SAFETY RELEASE UNTIL READY TO USE.***
- ***DO NOT USE IF SOLUTION IS DISCOLORED OR RED FLAG APPEARS IN CLEAR WINDOW.***
- ***DO NOT PLACE PATIENT INSERT OR ANY OTHER FOREIGN OBJECTS IN CARRIER WITH AUTO-INJECTOR, AS THIS MAY PREVENT YOU FROM REMOVING THE AUTO-INJECTOR FOR USE.***

*To view a web video presentation of the above directions, go to
www.epipen.com/howtouse.aspx*

Questions

- Thank you for participating in this important training.

- If you have any questions please contact your school nurse.

References

DEY LP. (2004). *Patient Insert: EpiPen and EpiPen Jr. [Package Insert]*.