

Anaphylaxis Recognition and Emergency First Aid Treatment

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction and can be fatal if not treated quickly. It can cause serious breathing difficulties, a fall in blood pressure, swelling of the tongue and throat, obstructing the airway and can cause death. Common triggers include: nuts, shellfish, eggs, wasp and bee stings, latex and certain medications.

Recognition

- Red, itchy rash or raised areas of skin (weals).
- Red, itchy, watery or puffy eyes.
- Swelling of hands, feet and/or face.
- Abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhoea.
- Difficulty in breathing.
- Pale or flushed skin.
- Visible swelling of tongue and throat.
- Feeling of terror.
- Confusion and agitation.
- Collapse and loss of consciousness.

Casualties may only experience two or three symptoms.



Emergency First Aid Treatment

1. **Call 999 and tell ambulance control that you suspect anaphylaxis.**
2. If the casualty has an adrenaline auto-injector, help them to use it.
3. If the casualty cannot use their auto-injector and you are trained you can administer it.
 - a. Pull off the safety cap.
 - b. Hold the auto-injector in your fist.
 - c. Push the tip firmly against the casualty's thigh (through clothing, avoiding seams) until it clicks, releasing the medication.
 - d. Hold in position for 10 seconds, remove then massage the injection site for 10 seconds.
4. Help the casualty to sit up in the position that best relieves any breathing difficulty. However, if they feel faint or dizzy, get them to lie flat and raise their legs.
5. Ask a colleague to wait outside for the ambulance and escort the paramedics to you.
6. Monitor breathing and the level of response. Be prepared to resuscitate the casualty.
7. Give a second injection in the opposite thigh if the symptoms reoccur or the casualty still feels unwell after 5 -15 minutes.

