

Anaphylaxis: Mechanisms and management

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Anaphylaxis

- Epidemiology
- Clinical features
- Morbidity/Mortality
- Pathophysiology
- Management
 - Acute
 - Long term (prevention)
 - Pitfalls

A[na]phylaxis

- Originates from Greek, meaning against or without protection.
As opposed to prophylaxis for protection
- A rapidly evolving, generalised multi-system reaction characterized by one or more symptoms or signs of respiratory, cardiovascular and other systems such as the skin and/or gastrointestinal tract.

ASCIA

WAO Definition

WAO Journal • February 2011

WAO Anaphylaxis Guidelines

TABLE 1. Clinical Criteria for Diagnosing Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is highly likely when any one of the following three criteria is fulfilled

1. Acute onset of an illness (minutes to several hours) with involvement of the skin, mucosal tissue, or both (eg, generalized urticaria, itching or flushing, swollen lips-tongue-uvula)
- AND AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - A) Respiratory compromise (eg, dyspnea, wheeze-bronchospasm, stridor, reduced PEF, hypoxemia)
 - B) Reduced blood pressure^a or associated symptoms of end-organ dysfunction (eg, hypotonia [colliques], syncope, incontinence) OR
2. Two or more of the following that occur rapidly after exposure to a likely allergen^b for that patient (minutes to several hours)
 - A) Involvement of the skin-mucosal tissue (eg, generalized urticaria, itch-flush, swollen lips-tongue-uvula)
 - B) Respiratory compromise (eg, dyspnea, wheeze-bronchospasm, stridor, reduced PEF, hypoxemia)
 - C) Reduced blood pressure or associated symptoms (eg, hypotonia [colliques], syncope, incontinence)
 - D) Persistent gastrointestinal symptoms (eg, crampy abdominal pain, vomiting) OR
3. Reduced blood pressure after exposure to known allergen^c for that patient (minutes to several hours)
 - A) Infants and children: low systolic blood pressure (age-specific) or greater than 30% decrease in systolic blood pressure^d
 - B) Adults: systolic blood pressure of less than 90 mm Hg or greater than 30% decrease from that person's baseline

PEF: peak expiratory flow
^aor other signs, for example, immunologic, but IgE-independent, or nonimmunologic (direct) mast cell activation.
^bFor example, after an insect sting, reduced blood pressure might be the only manifestation of anaphylaxis, or, in a similar example, during allergen immunotherapy, after injection of a known allergen for that patient, generalized urticaria (only one body organ system affected) might be the only initial manifestation of anaphylaxis.
^cLow systolic blood pressure for children is defined as less than 70 mm Hg from 1 month to 1 year, less than 70 mm Hg = (2 × age) from 1 to 10 years, and less than 90 mm Hg from 11 to 17 years. Normal heart rate ranges from 90-160 beats/min at age 1-3 years, from 80-120 beats/min at age 3 years, and from 70-110 beats/min after age 3 years. Infants are more likely to have respiratory compromise than hypotension or shock, and in this age group, shock is more likely to be masked initially by tachycardia than by hypotension.
^dClinical criteria 1, 2, and 3 are taken from reference 2.
 References 33 and 34 support footnotes b and c, respectively.

Epidemiology

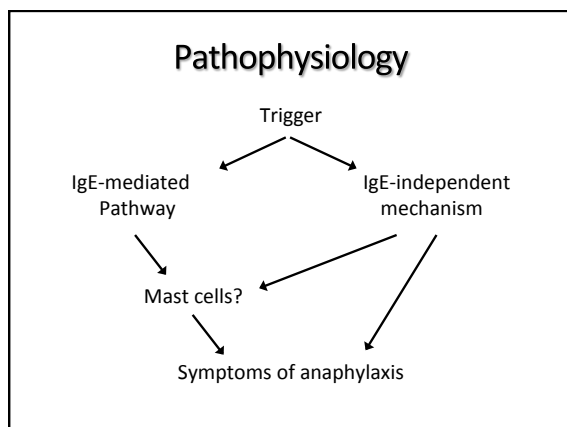
- Uncommon
- Incidence:
8.4 - 21 per 100,000 patient years¹
- Australian parents report 1:170 children have had one episode of anaphylaxis²

¹Brown et al., MJA (2007); Sampson et al. JACI (2005)

²Boros et al., J Paediatr Child Health (2000)

Causes

- Foods (most common in children)
- Insect Stings
- Latex
- Drugs; Anaesthetic Agents; IV Contrast
- Seminal Fluid
- Exercise
- Idiopathic



Pathophysiology

<p><u>IgE mediated:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Haptens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Penicillins, Antibiotics (most) ■ Complete Antigens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Venoms, Allergen extracts ■ Food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Insulin ■ IVIg ■ Others... 	<p><u>IgE-independent / non-allergic:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Non-immune mast cell activators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Radiocontrast, opiates, neuromuscular relaxants ■ Complement-mediated (anaphylatoxins) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Blood Tx, IgA deficiency ■ Modulators of arachidonic acid metabolism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NSAIDs ■ Other: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ exercise, idiopathic
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Clinical Manifestations

- Skin:
 - Flushing
 - Pruritus
 - Urticaria
 - Angioedema
- Cardiovascular system:
 - Tachycardia (bradycardia)
 - Hypotension/shock (Pale/floppy child)
 - Arrhythmias
 - Ischaemia, chest pain

- Upper respiratory:
 - Congestion
 - Rhinorrhoea
 -
- Lower respiratory:
 - Throat/chest tightness
 - Hoarseness
 - Bronchospasm
 - Wheeze, cough
- Gastrointestinal tract:
 - Oral pruritus
 - Cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea

Frequency of Manifestations

• Cutaneous	90%
– Urticaria and Angioedema	85-90%
– Flushing	45-55%
• Respiratory	40-60%
– Dyspnea and Wheeze	45-50%
– Laryngeal Angioedema	50-60%
– Rhinitis	25-20%
• Dizziness, syncope, hypotension	30-35%
• Abdominal (n+v, colic, diarrhoea)	25-30%

Lieberman P et al JACI 2005;115(3):5483-5523

Mortality

- **About 1 per 1 - 3 million population p.a.**
- **In ED: 1 per 100-200 episodes**
- Approx 20-30 deaths p.a. in UK, probably an underestimate.
- Most due to medication or blood Tx, sometimes to insect stings, rarely to food.

Brown et al., MJA (2007)

UK causes of fatal anaphylaxis

Sting	47	29 wasp, 4 bee, 14 unidentified
Nuts	32	2 almond, 2 brazil, 1 hazel, 10 peanut, 8 walnut, 11 mixed or unidentified nuts
Food	13	1 banana, 2 chickpea, 2 fish, 5 milk, 2 crustacean, 1 snail
Food?	18	1 ?fish, 5 during meal, 1 ?grape, 3 ?milk, 3 ?nut, 1 ?sherbet, 1 ?strawberry, 1 ?yeast, 1 ?nectarine
Antibiotic	27	1 benzylpenicillin, 10 aminopenicillin, 12 cephalosporin, 1 ciprofloxacin, 1 vancomycin, 2 amphoteracin
Anaesthetic	35	19 suxamethonium, 7 vecuronium, 6 atracurium, 7 at induction
Other drug	15	3 ACE inhibitor, 6 NSAID, 5 gelatines, 2 protamine, 2 vitamin K, 1 diamox, 1 etoposide, 1 pethidine, 1 heroin, 1 kabikinase, 1 local anaesthetic
Contrast media	11	9 iodinated, 1 technetium, 1 fluorescein
Other	4	1 latex, 1 hair dye, 1 hydatid, 1 idiopathic

Mortality

Anaphylaxis is not uncommon, but death from anaphylaxis is very rare.

Brown et al., MJA (2007)

Risk factors for death from food-induced anaphylaxis

- Trigger: Peanut / tree nut / fish most common
- Asthma (even well controlled), cardiac disease
- Mastocytosis
- Previous allergic reaction to same food
- Biphasic course
- Not at home when reaction occurs
- Non-timely delivery of adrenaline *but mortality not prevented by early adrenaline alone*

Sampson et al, NEJM (1992)
Pumphrey, Curr Opin Allergy Clin Immunol. (2004)

Risk assessment

Who is at risk of anaphylaxis?

- Previous anaphylaxis?
- In patients with previous mild reactions, 44-80% of subsequent reactions are severe^{1,2}
- sIgE / SPT do not predict severity (CRD may prove to be more useful)

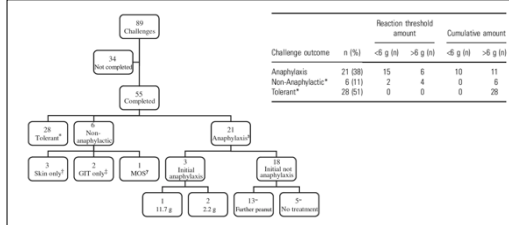
➤ Can thresholds be useful?

Are patients who react to minimal doses of allergen more likely to develop anaphylaxis?

1 2

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PEDIATRIC ALLERGY AND IMMUNOLOGY
Prediction of anaphylaxis during peanut food challenge: usefulness of the peanut skin prick test (SPT) and specific IgE level

From: Sarah Wainwright¹, Jennifer Doolan², Mary Engler³ and John B. Cooke¹
¹Department of Paediatrics and Paediatric Endocrinology, ²Department of Paediatrics, ³Department of Paediatric Allergy, ⁴Department of Paediatric Immunology and ⁵Department of Paediatric Dermatology, University of New South Wales, Sydney, New South Wales, Australia



- 21/27 children with +ve OFC developed anaphylaxis:
- 3 as initial symptom
 - 13 with subsequent peanut exposure.

Threshold dose for peanut: Risk characterization based upon diagnostic oral challenge of a series of 286 peanut-allergic individuals

Steve L Taylor^{a,b}, D.A. Moneret-Vautrin^a, Rene W.R. Crevel^c, David Sheffield^d, Martine Morisset^b, P. Dumont^b, Benjamin C. Remington^e, Joseph L. Baumert^e
Food and Chemical Toxicology 48 (2010) 814-819

ED₀₁ doses^a for whole peanut as assessed by the log-normal probability distribution model for Severity Grade.

Severity grade	Total no. of peanut-allergic individuals	ED ₀₁	95% CI
Severe ^b	40	10.4	4.8, 22.6
Non-severe ^b	123	10.2	6.4, 16.1
No prior history ^c	123	27.0	17.4, 42.0

All values reported in mg whole peanut. Statistically valid ED₀₁ estimates could not be provided due to the limited number of subjects in all of the severity grade classes.
^a Severe reactions include three organ systems, asthma requiring treatment, laryngeal edema, and/or hypotension.
^b Non-severe reactions include one or two organ systems, abdominal pain, rhinorrhoea/conjunctivitis, urticaria, eczema, non-laryngeal angioedema, and/or mild asthma (peak flow rate <80%).
^c History of prior allergic reactions and severity of reactions were not available.

NB: Subjects with prior severe reactions were not excluded.

Risk assessment

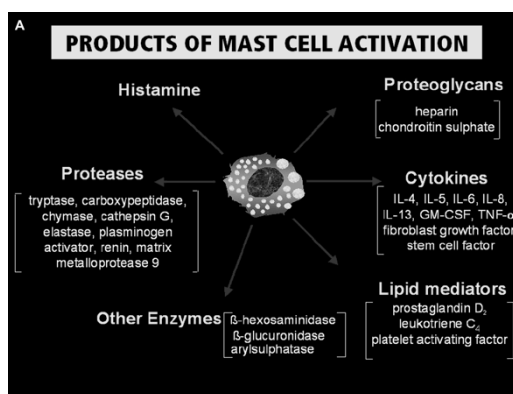
Predicting severity...

- Previous anaphylaxis ?
- Up to ¼ of peanut-allergic children will experience anaphylaxis if given sufficient dose
- Patients with anaphylaxis do not appear to be more sensitive i.e. same threshold

MECHANISMS OF ANAPHYLAXIS

Mast Cells

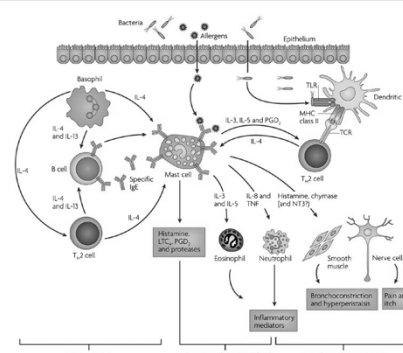
- Originate in the bone marrow, reside in connective tissues where they mature
- Increase host response to parasitic infections
- Contain immunological mediators in granules
- 2 populations that vary in granule content and activity:
 - Connective tissue
 - Mucosal
- Has high affinity for IgE molecules (10⁵ IgE/cell)



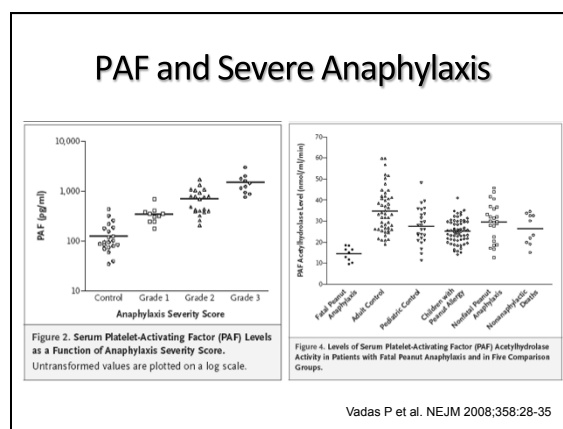
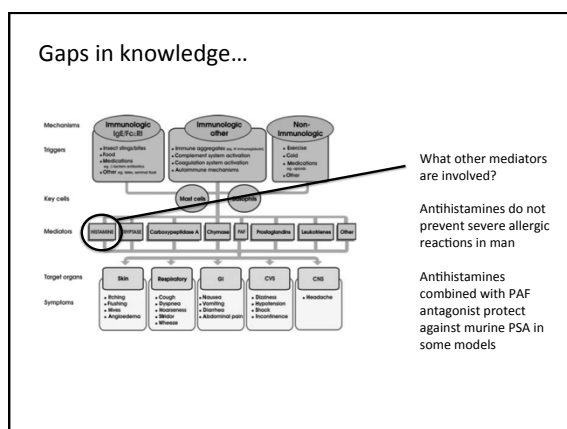
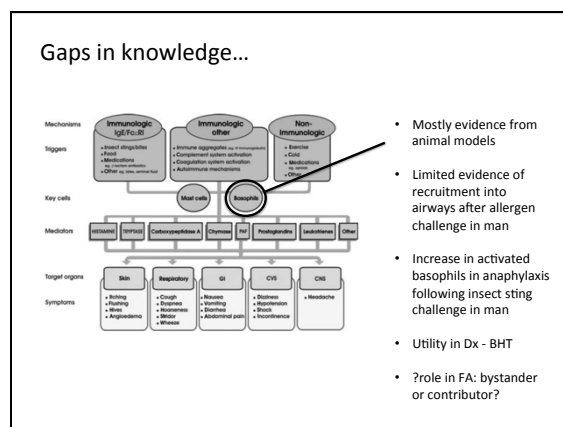
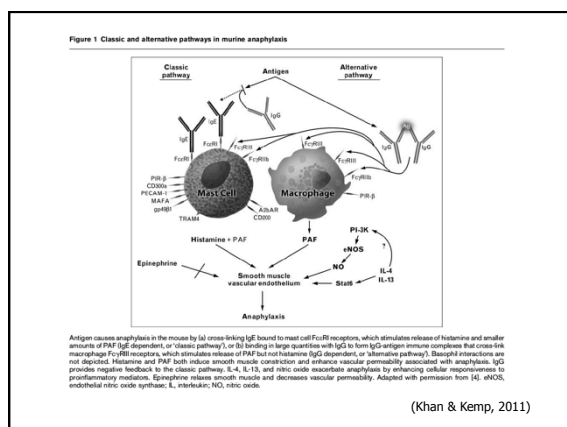
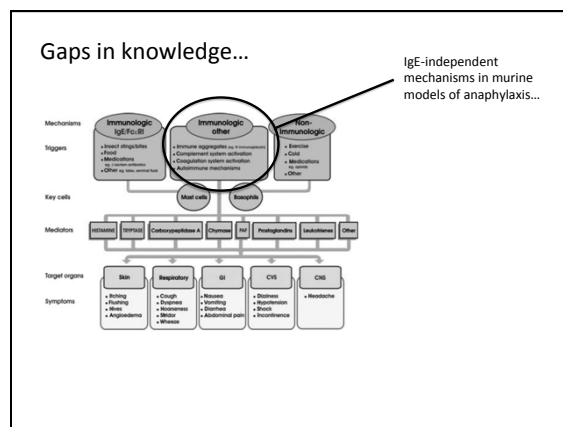
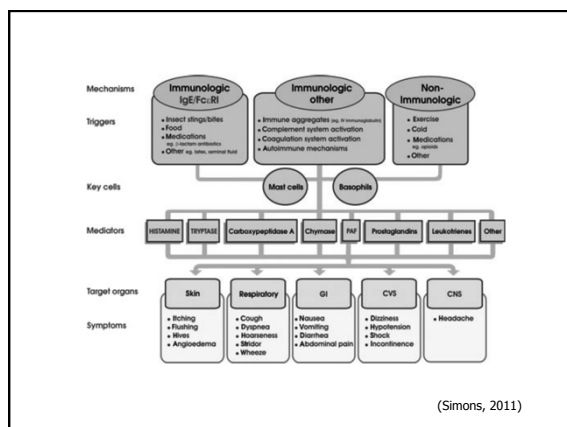
Histamine

- Coronary vasoconstriction
- Bronchoconstriction
- Vascular permeability
- Intestinal smooth muscle contraction
- Increased secretion of gastric and mucosal cells
- Dysrhythmias

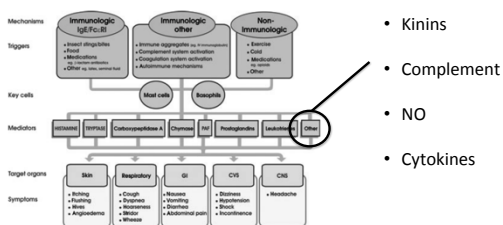
But histamine receptor blockade does not prevent anaphylaxis in man



Nature Reviews | Immunology
Bischoff Nature Reviews Immunology 7, 93-104 (February 2007) | doi:10.1038/nri2018

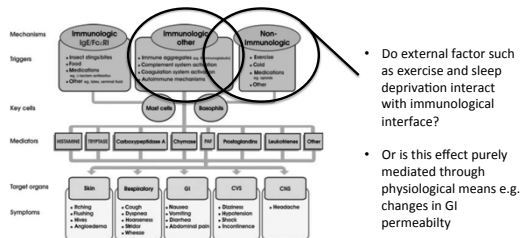


Gaps in knowledge...



- Kinins
- Complement
- NO
- Cytokines

Gaps in knowledge...



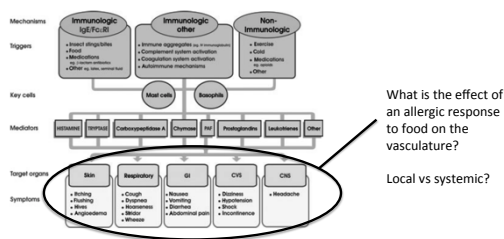
- Do external factor such as exercise and sleep deprivation interact with immunological interface?
- Or is this effect purely mediated through physiological means e.g. changes in GI permeability

Subject #	Extrinsic factors						Total number of episodes	Symptoms
	Infection or other intercurrent illness	Exercise	Tiredness	Anxiety	Anti-allergen co-exposure	Menstruation		
1					2		3	RC, W
4	1		3	1			5	OL, W, SOB
5			1				1	OI
6	1	1	>5				>5	AP, V, A
7			5				5	AP, RC, OI
12				1			1	AP, W
14	4						4	OL, AP, W
15	>5						>5	OI
17	1						>5	AP, N
19	1	4	2				>5	W, V
20	>5		2	>5			>5	OL, AP
21	>5		1		3		>5	AP, IL, W

Subjects experiencing transient symptoms due to extrinsic factors (infection/underlying illness, exercise, tiredness, anxiety, aerosol/region exposure), total number of episodes of reactions with extrinsic factors for each subject and symptoms occurring during those episodes. 'Tiredness' is defined by reduced sleep duration on the previous night(s). Subject 21 had three episodes of reaction during three consecutive menstrual periods.
 OL, oral itching; AP, abdominal pain; N, nausea; V, vomiting; A, angioedema; RC, rhinoconjunctivitis; OI, urticaria; OI, oral immunotherapy.

Anagnostou et al, 2009

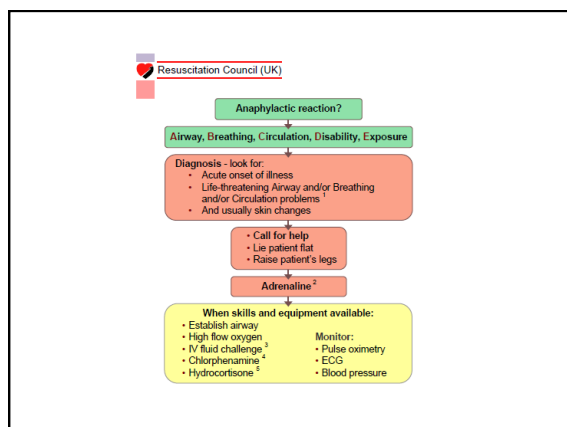
Gaps in knowledge...



- What is the effect of an allergic response to food on the vasculature?
- Local vs systemic?

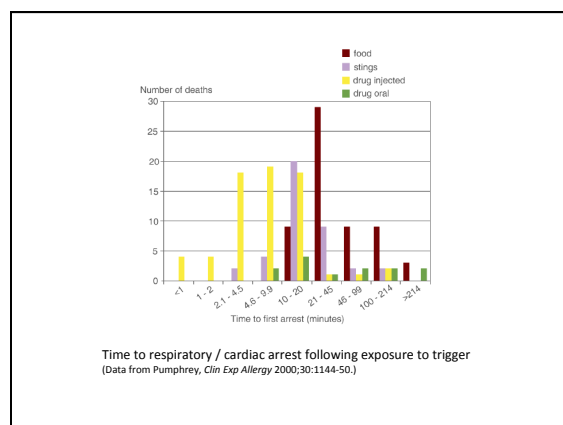
Murine models		Human
10-30%	Neutrophils in peripheral blood	50-70%
Monomeric, low serum levels	IgA	Mono- & dimeric, abundant in serum
+	Presence of IgE	+
+	FcεR1 on mast cells and basophils	+
No	FcεR1 on macrophages and Langerhans cells	+
+	FcγRIIb on mast cells	+
+	FcγRIII on macrophages	+
No	Presence of FcγRIIA, FcγRIIIB, and FcγRIIIC	+
+	Mast cell production of histamine	+
+	Sensitivity to histamine	++++
+	Macrophage production of PAF	+
+(weak)	Activation of mast cells by IgG	No
+	IgE binding to FcγRIIb and FcγRIII	+
Relatively high doses: 200mg (=1000 peanuts!)	Oral induction of anaphylaxis	Very low doses - mgs

MANAGEMENT



- ### Pitfalls in management
1. Recognition
 2. Biphasic reaction
 3. Failure to treat refractory anaphylaxis aggressively
 4. Inappropriate use of drugs
 5. Suboptimal management at/after discharge

- ### 1) Recognition
- MILD TO MODERATE ALLERGIC REACTION**
- swelling of lips, face, eyes
 - hives or welts
 - tingling mouth
 - abdominal pain, vomiting (these are signs of a severe allergic reaction to insects)
- ANAPHYLAXIS (SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTION)**
- difficult/noisy breathing
 - swelling of tongue
 - swelling/tightness in throat
 - difficulty talking and/or hoarse voice
 - wheeze or persistent cough
 - loss of consciousness and/or collapse
 - pale and floppy (young children)
- All fatal food-induced anaphylactic reactions cause respiratory difficulties**



- ### 2) Biphasic reactions...
- May appear within seconds, or as late as 2 hours after ingestion of trigger food.
 - Up to one third have a biphasic reaction.
 - Initial symptoms → apparent resolution → recurrence of symptoms after 1-3 hours
 - Observe for minimum 4-6 hours in hospital
 - 90% of biphasic reactions occur within 4 hrs¹
 - Caution in those with severe asthma, previous biphasic reactions, geographical isolation
- ¹Lee et al, *Pediatrics* 2000.

- ### Risk factors for biphasic reaction
- >1 dose adrenaline¹
 - Fluid bolus¹
 - Delayed administration of adrenaline²
 - ? use of subcutaneous adrenaline²
- ¹Mehr et al. *Clin Exp Allergy* 2009 39:1390.
²Lee & Greenes, *Pediatrics* 2000 106:762.

3) Failure to treat refractory anaphylaxis aggressively

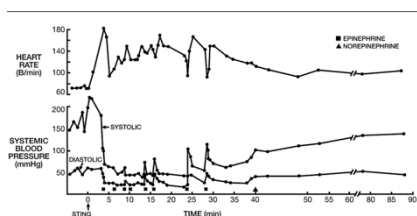


Figure 2: Severe Anaphylaxis Following an Insect Sting in Patient 2—The time of the sting is indicated on the abscissa. Blood pressure is shown by the ■ and the pulse rate by the ×. Each ■ denotes IV administration of 4–5 mL of 1:10,000 epinephrine (0.4–0.5 mg) as a bolus over 10 to 15 seconds. The ▲ denotes the start of a 2-minute infusion of norepinephrine. Reproduced, with permission, from Smith.[14]

3) Failure to treat refractory anaphylaxis aggressively

- Repeated IM adrenaline ± infusion
 - Fluid bolus – repeated if poor response
 - Inotropes
 - Glucagon if on beta-blockers
 - IV hydrocortisone
- Admit for at least 24hrs if patient requires more than 1 dose adrenaline or fluid bolus etc.

4) Inappropriate use of drugs

- Wrong drug
- Wrong dose
- Suboptimal or dangerous route of administration

Antihistamines

- Slow onset of action – at least 30 mins+
- Don't block all histamine receptors
- Don't inhibit other mediators released
- Appear to be mostly active against skin symptoms (little effect on CVS / RS)
- Cannot inhibit "Mast cell leukocyte cytokine cascade"
- Can be useful to treat urticaria and pruritus
- ?more effective if combined with H2 antagonists
- May have prophylactic value (eg before IT)

(Glucocorticoid)steroids

- Onset of action 4 - 6 hours
- Will inhibit the "Mast cell leukocyte cytokine cascade"
- Administer only after initial stabilisation
- Potentially influence biphasic response
- Evidence limited
- Benefit
 - Patients with asthma (steroid responsive diseases)
 - Prophylaxis for idiopathic anaphylaxis

Salbutamol (Ventolin)

- Fails to treat all the other symptoms of anaphylaxis
- Will not inhibit the "Mast cell leukocyte cytokine cascade"
- Will not prevent further deterioration
- Administer only after initial stabilisation i.e. if the onset of wheeze might be due to anaphylaxis, give IM and nebulised adrenaline.

Role of adrenaline (epinephrine)

- α 1-adrenergic effects:
 - Vasoconstriction
 - Increased peripheral vascular resistance
 - Decreased mucosal oedema
- β 2-adrenergic effects:
 - Bronchodilatation
 - Decreased mediator release from mast cells and basophils

1st line drug of choice

Dose

0.01 ml/kg
(10 mcg/kg)
1:1000 Adrenaline

OR

≤ 1 yr	0.05 - 0.1ml
1 - 2 yrs	0.1 ml
2 - 3 yrs	0.15 ml
4 - 6 yrs	0.2 ml
7 - 10 yrs	0.3 ml
10 - 12 yrs	0.4 ml
> 12 yrs	0.5 ml

IM doses of 1:1000 adrenaline (repeat after 5 min if no better)

- Adult: 500 micrograms IM (0.5 mL)
- Child more than 12 years: 500 micrograms IM (0.5 mL)
- Child 6 - 12 years: 300 micrograms IM (0.3 mL)
- Child less than 6 years: 150 micrograms IM (0.15 mL)

Where & how

- IM anterolateral thigh > IM or SC deltoid

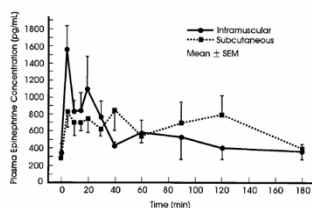


FIG. 1. Mean plasma epinephrine concentration versus time plot after injection of epinephrine subcutaneously in nine children and after injection of epinephrine intramuscularly in eight children.

(Simons et al, JACI 1998)

- Infusions reserved for refractory cases

In-hospital treatment

- ABC
- A incl. adrenaline IM if needed
- B - Oxygen
- IV access - IV fluids if ongoing hypotension
- \pm H1 antagonist and corticosteroids (may help reduce biphasic response)
- nebulised salbutamol may be used for lower airway obstruction
- Further doses of adrenaline
- IV adrenaline infusion for refractory symptoms

Further Management

- Other drugs
 - Glucagon if patient is on beta-blockers
 - Vasopressors e.g. dopamine if poor response to repeated IM adrenaline + fluid boluses
- Observe for minimum 4 hours in hospital
 - 90% of biphasic reactions occur within 4 hrs¹
- Recommended discharge meds
 - ? Antihistamine ?steroid for 48 hours
 - Adrenaline Auto-injector device

¹Lee et al, Pediatrics 2000.

Adrenaline Autoinjectors



Beware of needle size!

- Medicine needs to get to muscle.
- We are getting fatter!

Standard UK needle gauges and lengths		
Brown	26G	10 mm
Orange	25G	16 mm or 25 mm
Blue	23G	25 mm
Green	21G	38 mm

- Generally recommend 25G (orange), 25mm
- May need blue needle in some children.
- Autoinjector devices may have too short needles for some children!¹

¹Stecher et al, Pediatrics 2009 124:65-70.

PEDIATRICS

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS
 Epinephrine Auto-injectors: Is Needle Length Adequate for Delivery of Epinephrine Intramuscularly?
 Dawn Stecher, Blake Billings, Tamara Salzer, Corrie Schwartz and Lane Klotzky
 Pediatrics 2009;124:65-70

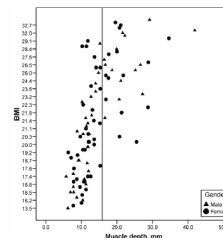


FIGURE 2 Scatter plot of depth to muscle from skin surface vs BMI (>30kg group). The vertical line represents the length of the needle (15.8 mm).

IV Adrenaline

- IV adrenaline can cause life-threatening hypertension, tachycardia, arrhythmias, and myocardial ischaemia in patients with a spontaneous circulation
- Use of IV adrenaline in cardiac arrest totally different
- Risk of incorrect dose, inappropriate usage.
- Reserved for patients who require repeated IM doses.
- If used:
 - Call expert help
 - Monitoring essential: continuous ECG, O2 Sats and <5minutely BP
 - Titrate dose of 1mcg/kg against response. Requires very careful dilution – hence IM preferred
 - Infusion more appropriate.

5) Suboptimal management at discharge

- ?antihistamine ?steroid for 48 hours
- Adrenaline Auto-injector device vital
- Appropriate dietary advice
 - Avoid trigger
 - If Cow's Milk, don't recommend:
 - Lactose-free
 - Partially hydrolysed formula
 - Caution with Soy, Extensively hydrolysed formula
- Referral!!

Adrenaline Auto-injectors

- Recommended for all children with previous anaphylaxis
- Training essential
- Anaphylaxis action plan essential
- Seek advice if needed.



NOT Recommended:

- Asthma without anaphylaxis or systemic allergy
- Positive skin or RAST test only
- Family history of anaphylaxis
- Local reactions to insect stings
- Generalised skin rash (only) to bee or wasp stings in children
- Resolved food allergy