Anaphylaxis

What is anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life threatening, allergic reaction, which may occur in certain people with allergy, after being exposed to a food, medication, insect sting, latex and sometimes exercise. **This is a major medical emergency that may affect the whole body. It must be treated right away.**

What are the symptoms of anaphylaxis?

A person with anaphylaxis may have any of these:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Face</th>
<th>itchy eyes or nose, flushed face, swollen lips or tongue, a metallic taste</th>
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<tr>
<td>Throat</td>
<td>itchy, tight or hoarse throat, dry or hacking cough, trouble swallowing or choking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skin</td>
<td>itchy or red skin, hives, swelling anywhere on the body</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chest and Lungs</td>
<td>tightness in chest, trouble breathing, shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>stomach pain, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea</td>
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<tr>
<td>All over</td>
<td>dizziness, fainting, feeling unsteady or sleepy,</td>
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How is anaphylaxis treated?

1. **If you or another person may be having anaphylaxis, give the epinephrine auto-injector right away even if you are not sure. This will not cause any harm.**

2. Always go to the hospital as the reaction may get worse. It is best to call 911.

3. If there are still symptoms, give another injection from a second epinephrine auto-injector after 15 minutes.

**There are several brands of epinephrine auto-injectors. Use the brand recommended by your health care provider.**
Helpful hints to protect yourself:

- It is best to avoid the things and situations that are known to trigger severe allergic symptoms.

- If you have had a reaction after an insect sting, you may need allergy shots for insect allergy. Ask your doctor or health care provider to refer you to a specialist called an allergist.

- If allergic to insect stings, do not go barefoot. Do not wear perfume or bright coloured clothes outdoors as these attract insects.

- If someone in the home is allergic to a food such as peanut, do not bring anything with that food into the house.

- When you have a food allergy and eat out, talk to the server and ask about menu items. Read food labels carefully.

- Always carry an epinephrine auto-injector and have it available. Friends and family should know how and when to use it.