

# TREATMENT OF ANAPHYLAXIS

DR PARISA ASHOURNIA ALLERGIST AND CLINICAL IMMUNOLOGIST



# Introduction

Anaphylaxis is a serious allergic reaction that is rapid in onset and may cause death.

Anaphylaxis thus lies along a spectrum of severity, ranging from mild objective breathing problems (such as mild wheezing) to circulatory "shock" and/or collapse ("anaphylactic shock").

Early recognition of anaphylaxis facilitates removal of the cause and prompt institution of treatment.

# Initial management

Removal of the inciting cause, if possible (eg, stop infusion of a suspect medication).

Basic life support (airway support, oxygen, ventilation support and external chest compressions if cardiac arrest occurs) and Call for help

Supine posture to prevent a deleterious reduction in venous return to the heart

Early administration of epinephrine, which physiologically antagonizes most of the pathophysiologic manifestations of anaphylaxis

If the blood pressure is low, intravenous fluid (volume) resuscitation to improve venous return to the heart





### position

Elevation of the legs may help with improving venous return

but the patient should not be placed head-down, because this may impair ventilation by increasing pressure on the diaphragm.

Modification of this position may be necessary if the patient has extreme respiratory distress (and then may insist on sitting) or vomiting (left lateral position used to keep upper airway clear of vomit). Place patient on the back or in a postion of comfort if there is respiratory distress/vomiting; elevate the lower extremities; fatality can occur within seconds if patient stands or sits suddenly.





#### Initial assessment and management

The most important drug in the acute treatment of anaphylaxis is adrenaline (epinephrine)

By activating alpha- and beta-receptors, adrenaline functionally antagonizes all relevant pathomechanisms of anaphylaxis via vasoconstriction, reduction of vascular permeability, bronchodilatation, reduction of edema, and positive inotropy of the heart.



In patients not requiring resuscitation, immediate intramuscular administration of adrenaline at a dose of 0.15-0.5mg to the outside of the upper thigh is the pharmacological treatment of first choice.

The risk of severe cardiac side effects is considerably lower compared to intravenous administration.



In the absence of an effect, and depending on adverse events, the injection can be repeated every 5-10min subject to clinical symptoms. The subcutaneous injection of adrenaline is no longer recommended due to its insufficient absorption and resulting delayed action. If symptoms fail to stabilize and circulatory or respiratory decompensation is imminent, adrenaline should be given intravenously. (if IV acces is not available obtain intraosseous or endotracheal acces)

IV: 0.01 ml/kg dose of 1:10000 slow IV push

- IV bolus dosing of epinephrine is less safe and, in inexperienced hands, incorrect dosing has been associated with serious adverse events, including acute pulmonary edema, ventricular arrhythmias, intracerebral hemorrhage, and death.
- reserve bolus IV dosing of epinephrine for cardiac arrest, in which case standard cardiac arrest dosing (1 mg IV bolus approximately every 3 min) is appropriate.







In addition to its IM administration, adrenaline can also be given by inhalation in the case of laryngeal edema and is also effective in bronchospasm.

Here, the administration of adrenaline, undiluted (e.g., 3-5ml at a concentration of 1mg/ml) via a nebulizer using a breathing mask/mouthpiece together with oxygen is recommended.

The inhaled administration of adrenaline does not replace parenteral administration and should only be used in an additive capacity.



If bronchial obstruction is the major symptom, the additional administration of inhaled betaadrenoceptor agonists is effective, e.g., salbutamol, at an initial dose of two puffs—if ineffective, between four and eight puffs, and/or subcutaneous terbutaline.

In the case of young children, the efficacy of inhaling a dosed aerosol can be increased by using a "spacer," together with a mask if required.



- Epinephrine should always be administered first, but
- If epinephrine is ineffective in treating anaphylaxis in patients taking β-blockers (These patients can experience refractory hypotension, bradycardia, and relapsing manifestations.), GLOCAGON administration may be necessary.
- Glucagon: positive inotropic and chronotropic effects on the heart.
- Glucagon can reverse refractory bronchospasm and hypotention during anaphylaxis in patients on  $\beta$ -blockers by activating adenyl cyclase directly bypassing the  $\beta$ adrenergic receptor.



The dose of glucagon is 1 to 5 mg intravenously as a bolus, followed by an infusion of 5 to 15 µg/min titrated against the clinical response.

Nausea and vomiting are the major limiting factors of Glucagon therapy, so intubation should be considered for Protection of the airway.





In manifest cardiovascular or pulmonary reactions, the administration of oxygen via a breathing mask is recommended, in particular a non-rebreather mask.

The administration of high-flow oxygen (100%) is recommended.

► A laryngeal mask or tube may be helpful.



# Volume replacement

It is clear that volume therapy can only be used in addition to the crucial mast cell-stabilizing and Vasoconstrictor effect of adrenaline therapy.

CRYSTALLOIDS (N/S or Ringer lactate): 30 cc/kg in

1<sup>st</sup> hour.

Adult: 1000-2000 mL rapidly (i.e. 5-10 mL/kg in first 5-10 min) ,with large bore (14 to 16 gauge adults)

Child: 10-20 mL/kg in first 5-10 min



### Antihistamines

Although antihistamines are not life-saving, they can offer dramatic relief of itching and urticaria. One clinical study found a combination H1 and H2 antagonists to be superior to an H1 antagonist alone.

Cetirizine: 0.25 mg/kg up to 10 mg po,
Diphen hydramine: 1.25 mg/kg up to 50 mg po, IM, IV,
Cimetidine: 4 mg/kg up to 200 mg IV.







### Corticosteroids

Corticosteroids and Antihistamines have a secondary role in the management of anaphylaxis.

However, patients recently completing a course of corticosteroids and those with known adrenal insufficiency should be treated.



Methylprednisolone: Adult: 50-100 mg IV Child: 1 mg/kg, maximum 50 mg IV  Biphasic anaphylaxis: a second wave reaction after the First wave improved.
Estimated 15% of pediatric anaphylaxis.

does not appear to be affected by the administration of corticosteroids during the initial therapy.

but it appears to be more common when therapy is initiated late and symptoms at presentation are more severe. Immunotherapy: is very effective for prophylaxis of bee - and wasp venom- induced anaphylaxis in sensitized patients and can be lifesaving.

Drug-induced anaphylaxis can be prevented by avoidance of culprit drugs and cross reacting agents,

by premedication (for radiocontrast media), and, in some cases, by drug desensitization for antibiotics, chemotherapeutic agents, insulin, vaccines, biological agents, and so on.

For food-induced anaphylaxis, avoidance of the culprit food is essential; oral immunotherapy is available in some allergy centers.

## **Observation** Period

current recommendations:

that patients should be monitored for 4 hours with relatively mild anaphylaxis.

6 to 8 hours for those with respiratory Compromise.

for selected patients with hypotension for 8
to 24 hours after resolution of symptoms.

 Moderate to severe reaction

- Need for multiple doses of epinephrine
  - Episode in an asthmatic patient with wheezing
- Ingested antigen with possibility of continued absorption
- Previous history of biphasic response

# POSTEMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Antihistamine

Corticosteroids

Cetirizine (5-10 mg qd) or loratadine (5-10 mg qd) for 3 days Optional: Oral prednisone (1 mg/kg up to 75 mg) daily for 3 days

 Prescription for epinephrine autoinjector
Provide written plan outlining patient emergency management





#### Follow-up evaluation to determine/confirm etiology

Immunotherapy for insect sting allergy

#### Patient Education:

- Instruction on avoidance of causative agent
- Information on recognizing early signs of anaphylaxis
- Stress early treatment of allergic symptoms to avoid systemic anaphylaxis
- Encourage wearing medical identification jewelry





Hospital	Dependent on	Treatment	Immediate
management	evaluation		action
*Pressor therapy *Continued therapy with listed agents and management of complications	*Peripheral intravenous fluids *Glucagon *H1 and H2 antihistamines *Vasopressors *Corticosteroids *Electrocardiogr aphic monitoring *Transfer to hospital	*Epinephrine IM *Supine position, legs elevated *Oxygen *Tourniquet proximal to injection site (if following allergen IT)	*Perform assessment *Check airway and secure if needed *Rapidly assess level of consciousness *Assess vital signs

#### Equipment and Medications for Office Therapy of Anaphylaxis

Epinephrine solution (aqueous) 1:1000 (1 mL ampules and multidose vials) Tourniquet 1-mL and 5-mL disposable syringes Oxygen tank and mask/nasal prongs Diphenhydramine injectable Intravenous setup with large-bore catheter Intravenous fluids: 2000 mL crystalloid Aerosol B2-bronchodilator and nebulizer Glucagon Defibrillator Normal saline (10-mL vial for epinephrine dilution)

