

Anaphylaxis Recognition & Epinephrine Auto-Injector Training for High School Personnel

- San Mateo Union High School District
- Fall Semester, 2003
- Presented by Jean Litarowsky, District Nurse
- The information for this presentation was provided by www.allergic-reactions.com , unless otherwise noted.
- In addition to this presentation, training includes:
 - viewing “How to use the Epi-pen Auto-Injector” video (Dey), hands-on practice with Epi-pen training device, & meeting students with a documented risk of anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis: Definition and Interesting Facts

- **Anaphylaxis:**

- Is a **rapid, severe allergic response**
- Is ***not*** always due to an obvious cause
- Is ***not*** always easy to avoid, even when the cause is known
- Is ***not*** always accompanied by hives



The most commonly documented causes of anaphylaxis include:

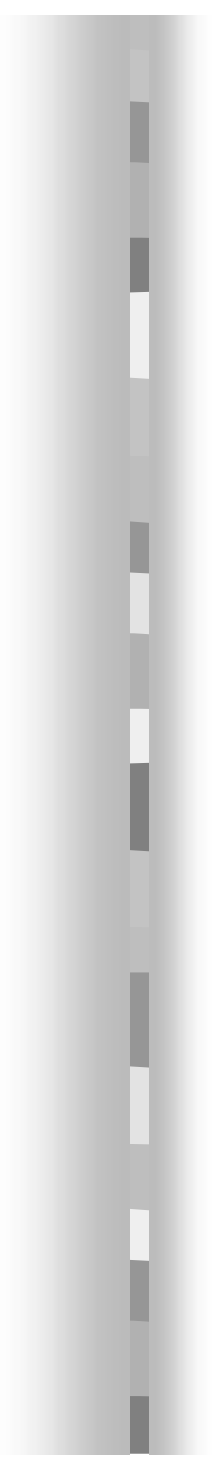
- Food allergies
- Insect venom
- Medications
- Latex

Exercise & “unknown” cause are less common causes of anaphylaxis



The most distinctive symptoms of anaphylaxis include:

- Hives/itchy skin
- Swelling of the throat, lips, tongue, or around the eyes
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing



Other common symptoms of anaphylaxis may include the following:

[Any of these ***symptoms***, always ***ask*** if there are “***any known allergies?***”]

- A metallic taste or itching in the mouth
- Generalized flushing, itching, or redness of the skin
- Abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Increased heart rate, rapidly decreasing blood pressure (paleness)
- Anxiety or an overwhelming sense of doom
- Weakness, collapse, loss of consciousness



Epinephrine (AKA:Adrenaline):

- Medication of choice for severe allergic reactions
- Constricts blood vessels
- Relaxes lung muscles to improve breathing
- Reverses swelling
- Increases heart rate
 - Think of how an “adrenaline rush” feels

Epinephrine, continued:

- Available ***by prescription*** in a single-dose auto-injector called an ***Epi-pen***
- Site of injection: ***thigh***
- Can be given through clothing
- Needle should be held in place for ***10 seconds***
- ***Call 911***



Side effects of Epinephrine include:

- Rapid heart rate
- Palpitations
- Sweating
- Nausea and vomiting
- Respiratory difficulty
- Other cardiac (heart) problems



Everyone experiencing a severe allergic reaction:

- Is advised to have **911/emergency medical care** following the administration of epinephrine
- ***One dose*** of epinephrine ***may not be enough!!***
 - Can have a *biphasic* reaction: a reoccurrence requiring additional treatment



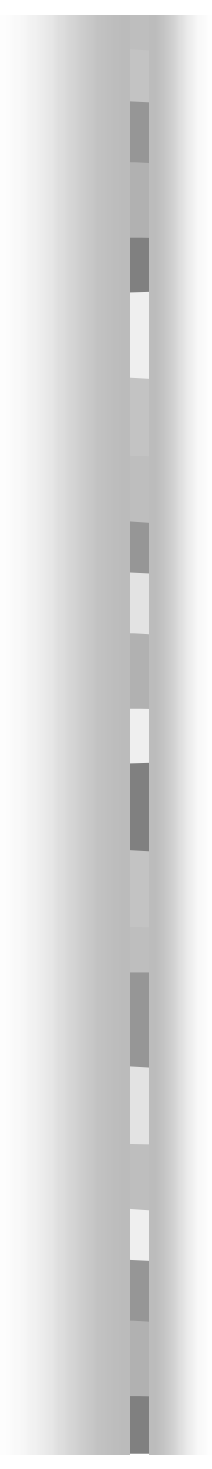
California Education Code mandates:

(Information retrieved online at www.leginfo.ca.gov)

- That minimum standards of training for the administration of epinephrine in schools through use of an auto-injector (Epi-pen) includes CPR instruction and certification
- Techniques for recognizing symptoms
- Standards and procedures for storage and emergency use of epinephrine auto-injectors
- Emergency follow-up procedures
- Written materials covering the above

Students in SMUHSD with a documented risk of anaphylaxis :

- Will be advised to **carry** an auto-injector (**Epi-pen**) and be allowed to self-medicate as needed (if capable).
- Will be sent an Anaphylaxis **Care Plan** to be completed.
 - Includes instructions & authorization for use of medication from MD and parent (example of approved care plan attached)
- Will be asked to provide an **extra Epi-pen** to be stored in the **Health Office** in an ***unlocked storage site.***



Summary of SMUHSD response to symptoms of anaphylaxis for students with documented risk:

- ***REACT QUICKLY***: *radio communication/alert*
- Allow student to self-medicate when possible
- If incapable, administration of Epi-pen by trained personnel
- **Call 911**-notify EMS if Epinephrine has been given
- **Call parent, &/or others as directed on care plan or emergency card**
- Document event & place in health file