

DESCRIPTION

Allergic reaction is a term used to describe the reaction by your body to a contacted substance. This contact may be with the skin, inhaled or ingested.

FREQUENT SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Itching, Swelling or Rash (Most commonly Hives)
- Difficulty Breathing, Wheezing or Chest Pain
- Abdominal Cramping, Nausea or Diarrhea
- Dizziness or Fainting
- Swelling of the Lips or Tongue

CAUSES

Anything can cause an allergic reaction. Some of the more common things are:

- Foods, such as shellfish, nuts, peanuts, eggs and fruits
- Medicines, such as antibiotics, aspirin, over-the-counter pain relievers, allergy shots and contrast dyes
- Latex or rubber
- Insect stings or bites, especially from bees, wasps, hornets, yellow jackets and fire ants

GENERAL TREATMENTS

- Antihistamines, such as Benadryl or Atarax
- Steroids, given orally or by injection
 - ↳ Unless your doctor tells you differently, always finish the full course of your steroid prescription, even if you start to feel better.
 - ↳ Steroids may interfere with the effectiveness of birth control pills. Use an alternative method of contraception for the remainder of the month after finishing your steroid prescription.
- Antacids, such as Pepcid, Zantac and Tagamet

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

- If you have had an allergic reaction, make sure your doctors and dentist know so that it is recorded in your medical record.
- If you are allergic to insects, wear protective clothing and insect repellent anytime you are outside.
- Avoid handling or eating foods you are allergic to; even tiny amounts may cause a reaction. Read the ingredients list on any packaged food or drink you plan to consume.
- Wear or carry a medical alert bracelet, necklace, or keychain that informs emergency medical technicians and doctors of your allergies.

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION IF

- Your rash persists after 72 hours, appears to be worsening or becoming infected
- You experience difficulty breathing or pain in your chest
- You notice any swelling of the lips or tongue