



# INTERLACHEN PEDIATRICS

## Allergies

### DESCRIPTION OF ANAPHYLACTIC REACTION

An anaphylactic reaction is an immediate, severe allergic reaction to a bee sting, drug, food, or other item. The symptoms are:

- wheezing, croupy cough, or difficulty breathing
- tightness in the chest or throat
- dizziness or passing out
- widespread hives, swelling, or itching (If these symptoms occur without the symptoms listed above, your child is probably not having an anaphylactic reaction. However, hives, swelling, or itching often occur with other serious symptoms when a child has a severe allergic reaction.)
- a previous severe allergic reaction to the same item.

### FIRST AID FOR A SUSPECTED ANAPHYLACTIC REACTION

#### 1. Call 911 IMMEDIATELY.

Call the rescue squad (911) if your child is having difficulty breathing or passes out. Have your child lie down with the feet elevated to prevent shock.

#### 2. Epinephrine

If you have an anaphylactic kit (Epi-Pen or Ana-Kit), give an injection of epinephrine (adrenaline) immediately. Epinephrine can save the life of your child. If in doubt, give it. Inject it into the subcutaneous (fat) layer of the outer part of the upper thigh.

#### 3. Antihistamine

If you have Benadryl at home, give it. If not, see whether you have another antihistamine or cold medication containing antihistamine. If you do, give one dose immediately in addition to epinephrine.

#### 4. Bee sting treatment

If a stinger is left in the skin, remove it. Do this by scraping the stinger off with a knife blade or credit card rather than by squeezing it. Then apply an ice cube to the site or a cotton ball soaked in a solution of meat tenderizer and water.

### PREVENTION

Children with anaphylactic reactions need to be evaluated by an allergist. Since the reactions can be fatal, you should keep emergency kits containing epinephrine at home and in the glove compartment of your car (epinephrine is available by prescription only).

Also, your child should have a medical identification necklace or bracelet that states the insect, drug, or food allergy. Some ID necklaces and bracelets can be found in pharmacies.

### What is hay fever?

Hay fever is an allergy to something your child breathes in. Plant pollens most often cause it. Your child probably has hay fever if:

- There is a clear discharge from your child's nose,
- **AND** your child's nose itches,
- **AND** your child sneezes and sniffs.
- Your child's eyes may also itch and water.

Here are the months of the year you may expect problems with hay fever:

- In April and May, the most common pollen is from trees.
- From May to July, most of the time it is from grass.
- From late August through the fall, ragweed pollen is the big problem.

Animal fur and other things could cause your child's hay fever.

### **How can I take care of my child?**

#### **Give your child an antihistamine.**

- This medicine works best for hay fever.
- Your child's medicine is \_\_\_\_\_. Give \_\_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_\_ hours during the day.
- If your child has hay fever every day, it's a good idea to give him the antihistamine throughout the pollen season.

#### **Shower your child and wash his hair every night before bed.**

- This will clean away the pollen. Your child should have fewer symptoms at night.

#### **Help your child stay away from pollen and other things that may cause hay fever.**

- Make sure your child stays away when someone cuts grass.
- Your child should stay indoors when it is windy or if there is a lot of pollen in the air.
- Make sure your child stays away from anything that causes his hay fever. Watch out for feather pillows, pets, farms, stables, and tobacco smoke.

#### **Wash your child's itchy or watery eyes.**

- Wash your child's face and eyelids with water. That will clean away any pollen.
- Put a cold wet cloth on your child's eyelids for 10 minutes.

#### **Call your child's doctor during office hours if:**

- The hay fever does not get better after your child takes medicine for 2 days.
- Your child gets sinus pain or pressure.
- You have other questions or concerns.

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