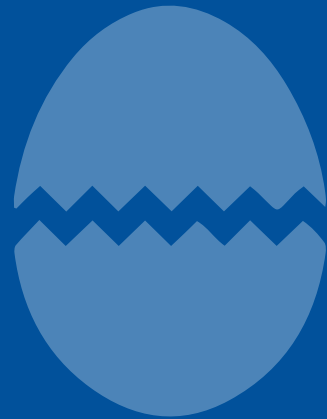
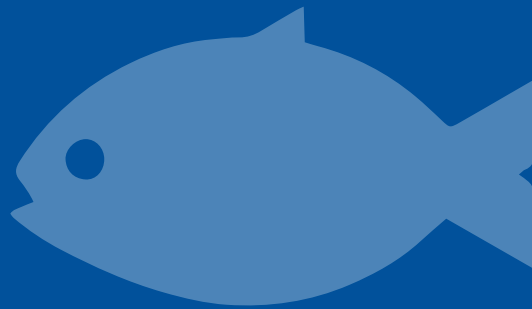


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TEACHING



Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is the severe and potentially life-threatening reaction to a trigger, such as an allergy. It can happen quickly so prompt recognition is important.



Signs and Symptoms

- Feeling lightheaded or faint
- Breathing difficulties – such as fast, shallow breathing, feeling as if their windpipe is closing up or they're choking
- Wheezing
- A fast heartbeat
- Clammy skin
- Confusion and anxiety
- Collapsing or losing consciousness
- There may also be other allergy symptoms, including an itchy, raised rash (hives), feeling or being sick, swelling (angioedema), or stomach pain



Causes

- Food - the most common allergies are nuts, fish, milk, eggs and shellfish
- Medication – patients may have allergies to certain medications, such as penicillin
- Insect stings
- General anaesthetic
- Contrast agents (a substance used to make the pictures clearer in medical imaging)
- Latex



Ward Based Management

- Nursing staff should be aware of any allergies a patient may have
- If a patient experiences an anaphylactic shock from an allergic reaction, then emergency ward protocol must be followed, giving as much information as possible to the responding team
- If possible identify the trigger and remove, for example, latex gloves from the patient
- Lie the patient down flat in a comfortable position (if deemed appropriate to do so)
- Most patients who have severe allergic reactions carry emergency rescue medicine (eg an EpiPen)
- Ensure a member of the care team is competent in administering it if the patient is unable
- If the patient has lost consciousness, then administer oxygen as/when appropriate
- Following the emergency protocol, the patient must be taken to the general ward for further treatment and observation
- Physical Observations
- Call a doctor