

FIRST AID FACT SHEET

Severe Allergic Reaction

A severe allergic reaction is the body's immune system overreacting to a foreign substance. This is called Anaphylaxis and is potentially life threatening.

Caused by

- + Food: Nuts, cow's milk, eggs, fish, shellfish and soy products.
- + Medications: Penicillin, Sulphur, antibiotics, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Codeine or Morphine.
- + Venom: Bites from ticks, stings from bees, wasps and ants.

Signs & symptoms

- + Difficult and/or noisy breathing.
- + Wheeze or persistent cough.
- + Swelling of the face and tongue.
- + Swelling/tightness of the throat.
- + Difficulty talking and/or "hoarse" voice.
- + Persistent dizziness or collapse.
- + Young children may become pale and floppy.
- + Abdominal pain and vomiting.
- + Hives, welts and body redness.

What to do

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan.
2. Lay the casualty flat. If breathing is difficult allow them to sit. **DO NOT** allow them to stand or walk.
3. If the casualty is carrying an adrenaline auto-injector, use it immediately. Ask the casualty if they need your help to use the auto-injector.
4. Urgent medical aid. Call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance immediately.
5. If required assist the casualty with an adrenaline autoinjector (EpiPen®).
 - + Form a firm fist around the EpiPen® and pull off the **BLUE SAFETY RELEASE**.
 - + Place **ORANGE END** against outer mid-thigh at a 90° angle (can be injected through clothing).
 - + Push top button down hard until a click is heard or felt and hold in place for three (3) seconds.
 - + Remove EpiPen® and dispose of it safely being careful of the needle.
6. Commence CPR at any time if the casualty is unresponsive and is not breathing normally.



In a medical emergency
call **Triple Zero (000)**

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Information provided is as per Australian Resuscitation Council Guidelines. These first aid protocols are for the Australian market only. All care has been taken in preparing this information but St John takes no responsibility for its use. This information is not a substitute for practical first aid training with St John.