

## Allergic Reactions - Prevention + Treatment: Issue 2 • [www.2health.com](http://www.2health.com)

**WHAT IS IT?** In Canada, 6% of children have food allergies. Allergies are hypersensitivities, overreactions of the immune system to substances that normally do not cause reactions. The first time a predisposed person is exposed to a potential allergen, they will not have a major reaction, instead they will become "sensitized".

### SOME COMMON CAUSES

- Foods, eg. peanuts, eggs, fish
- Food Additives, eg. colorings, tenderizers
- Insect Stings, eg. bees
- Drugs, eg. Penicillin, Sulpha Drugs
- Latex, eg. gloves, clothing

### PRACTISE / TO DO:

- Confirm family allergy history
- Speak with Dr. about testing
- Remove allergens from the home/ car/ school/ etc.
- Inform family, friends, schools of allergies and medications
- Learn to recognize signs of a reaction and how to use an Epi-Pen
- Change Air filters seasonally
- Teach the child how to avoid allergens and reduce their risk
- Read labels and ask about ingredients in restaurants, cafes, etc.
- Be aware and sensitive of other people's allergies/ chemical sensitivities (incl. perfumes, cosmetics)

### PREVENTION TIPS

- > Introduce one food at a time to babies
- > Get rid of dust collectors, including heavy drapes, upholstered furniture, & stuffed toys
- > Use an airtight, allergy-proof plastic cover on all mattresses, pillows and box springs.
- > Wash all bedding and stuffed animals in hot water every 7-14 days.
- > Keep pets out of the bedroom and wash your pet weekly to remove allergens.
- > Remove carpeting if possible.
- > Vacuum frequently (when your child is not in the room, since many allergens go back out of the vacuum cleaner bag).
- > Clean air filters each season.
- > Avoid the use of ceiling fans.
- > Keep indoor humidity low, since dust mites and mold increase in high humidity.
- > Provide a smoke-free environment

### SYMPTOMS

(not all appear in children)

- > Red flushed face, may be blotchy
- > Clammy, sweaty skin
- > Hives, rash and/or itching
- > Tingling or itchy feeling in mouth
- > Swollen eyes, lips, face or tongue
- > Coughing, choking, voice change
- > Breathing difficulties
- > Cramps, vomiting, diarrhea
- > Dizziness and/or confusion
- > Fear and anxiety
- > Rapid pulse

***If symptoms appears quickly, it is a major allergic response - call 911!***

### RESOURCES

**Allergy Asthma Information Association**  
National Office (Ontario):  
416-679-9521 / 1-877-500-2242  
E-mail: [national@aaia.ca](mailto:national@aaia.ca)  
Website: [www.aaia.ca](http://www.aaia.ca)

**Anaphylaxis Canada**  
Phone: 1-888-ANA-PHYL-AXIS  
E-mail: [network@anaphylaxis.org](mailto:network@anaphylaxis.org)  
Website: [www.anaphylaxis.org](http://www.anaphylaxis.org)

**Canadian MedicAlert Foundation**  
Canada's leading medical information service. Website: [www.medicalert.ca](http://www.medicalert.ca)

**"Anaphylaxis: The Handbook for School Boards"** Canadian School Board Assn.  
\$10 includes shipping and handling  
Suite 350, 130 Slater Street  
Ottawa, ON K1P 6E2  
Phone: 613-235-3724 to order booklet

This monthly 2HEALTH First Aid + Wellness Bulletin is provided free to companies, parents, and friends. 2HEALTH helps thousands of parents become rescue-confident since 1992 - in their home or office. 2HEALTH First Aid training is practical, fun + Red Cross certified.

### TREATMENT

#### **3 R's for treating an allergic reaction:**

1. Recognize symptoms
2. React quickly + call EMS/911
3. Review what happened and prevent it from reoccurring

#### **Here's how to use the EpiPen:**

- > Use only if it belongs to the person and it is not expired
- > **Use if breathing is affected**
- > If the child or adult can not self-administer the Epi-Pen, help them, assuming you have prior permission and practise
- > The Epi-Pen is **injected in the outer thigh (through clothes)**
- > Hold it for **10 seconds**
- > If symptoms are not relieved, a second EpiPen is required
- > Using the EpiPen **doesn't substitute for calling EMS/911**



[www.epipen.com](http://www.epipen.com)

### Resource of the month:

[www.allergic-reactions.com](http://www.allergic-reactions.com)

**Next month: Burns: prevention +first aid**

416.873.8606/ [firstaid@2health.com](mailto:firstaid@2health.com)