



australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy inc.

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ASCIA anaphylaxis training and Action Plan updates including new asthma and anaphylaxis information

Many individuals with severe allergies, who are at risk of anaphylaxis, also have asthma and sometimes it can be difficult to differentiate between anaphylaxis and asthma symptoms.

To help address this issue the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA), the peak medical society for immunology and allergy in Australia and New Zealand, has recently included a new “*Asthma and Anaphylaxis*” module into its updated versions of ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for schools, childcare services and the community.

ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training courses for schools, childcare services and community have been developed to provide ready access to high quality, consistent, reliable and evidence based anaphylaxis education throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The updated ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training courses include the following important changes:

- **New asthma and anaphylaxis module** – which provides clear guidance on how to respond in an emergency situation regarding anaphylaxis and asthma, as it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between the two conditions.
- **Updated ASCIA Action Plans** – which provide guidance on how to manage mild or moderate allergic reactions and anaphylaxis, including when and how to give the adrenaline autoinjector. For these reasons, ASCIA Action Plans should always be kept with the adrenaline autoinjector.
- **Updated information about adrenaline autoinjectors.**
- **Amendments to terminology** to ensure consistency with revised ASCIA Action plans and other ASCIA education resources.

The updated ASCIA Action Plans include the following important changes:

- **Revised wording regarding CPR** – by stating “Commence CPR at any time if person is unresponsive and not breathing normally”, which is consistent with the Australian Resuscitation Council (ARC) wording.
- **Revised wording regarding asthma** – by stating “If uncertain whether it is asthma or anaphylaxis, give adrenaline autoinjector first, then asthma reliever medication.” and inclusion of a tick box in the personal (red and green) versions to indicate if the person has asthma.
- **Space to include a larger photo** of the individual in the personal (red and green) versions.

The updated ASCIA Action Plans can be freely downloaded from the ASCIA website by doctors, patients or their care-givers from:

www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/anaphylaxis-resources/ascia-action-plan-for-anaphylaxis

It is important to note that:

- ASCIA Action Plans are medical documents and therefore must be completed and signed by the individual’s medical practitioner (GP or specialist).
- Parents of children with food allergy/anaphylaxis are encouraged to visit their GP yearly to renew ASCIA Action Plans for the new school year, to be re-trained in the use of their adrenaline autoinjector device (if prescribed), and check if any new problems have arisen that might suggest the need for availability of an adrenaline autoinjector (e.g. new regular asthma, new or more serious allergic reaction).

ASCIA – Background Information

ASCIA is the peak professional medical society for immunology and allergy in Australia and New Zealand. As such, ASCIA has the benefit of:

- Providing the most up to date evidence based training resources that are available on the ASCIA website (www.allergy.org.au);
- Drawing on the expertise of the ASCIA membership and key stakeholder organisations to ensure that the training resources are accurate and appropriate for the intended target audience;
- Established relationships with stakeholder organisations who are involved in the consultation process.

Anaphylaxis – Background Information

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction that requires urgent medical treatment. It is essential for school and childcare staff to know how to recognise and respond to an anaphylaxis emergency as well as implement appropriate risk minimisation strategies to prevent exposure to known allergens.

Recent Australian data indicates that 1 in 10 children will have food allergy by the age of one year. With the increasing prevalence of food allergy, it is vital that all staff working in schools and children's services have ready access to anaphylaxis training.

Information about anaphylaxis is available on the ASCIA website Anaphylaxis Resources section www.allergy.org.au/health-professionals/anaphylaxis-resources which includes the latest versions of ASCIA Action Plans for Anaphylaxis, ASCIA Action Plans for Allergic Reactions, FAQ and instructions on how to use adrenaline autoinjectors.

ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training – General Information

ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training is available **free of charge** from the ASCIA website www.allergy.org.au and each course takes approximately one hour to complete. A certificate can be printed out upon successful completion. Since the first versions were released in March 2010 there have been more than 140,000 registrations for these courses, which are updated annually.

ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training should be completed in conjunction with regular practice using adrenaline autoinjector training devices (with no needle and no adrenaline). To order EpiPen trainers email alphapharmss@alphapharm.com.au and to order Anapen trainers email info@analert.com

To register for ASCIA e-training, a username and password must be obtained for each participant from the login page. When registering it is essential that your email address is correctly spelt as a confirmation email will be sent to the email address you have entered.

Whilst it was developed by the peak professional body for allergy and clinical immunology in Australasia (ASCIA), ASCIA anaphylaxis e-training for schools is not an accredited course, which may be required by state schools in some regions. However, ASCIA anaphylaxis training for childcare services is approved by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) for use throughout all Australian regions.

For further information visit www.allergy.org.au or email projects@allergy.org.au