

Are you allergy aware?









What is allergy?

An allergy is when the immune system reacts to substances (allergens) in the environment which are usually harmless, such as food, pollens, dust mites and insects.

People with allergies to triggers in the environment can get hay fever and asthma like symptoms such as:

- Runny nose, sneezing and itchy eyes
- Cough, tight chest and get out of breath







Why do people have allergies?

- Sometimes it's because their parents have allergies
- Most of the time we just don't know
- Lots of research is being undertaken to try to find out why
- You can't catch an allergy from someone else



People can be allergic to:

- Food
- Insects (e.g. bees, wasps, ants) and ticks
- Medicines (including alternate medicines and illegal drugs)
- Things in the environment (e.g. dust mite, pollen, pet dander, mould)





Most people know about peanut allergy, but lots of other foods can cause allergic reactions that are just as severe.















Symptoms of an allergic reaction can include:

- Itchy red skin and lumps called hives
- Face swelling
- Bad coughing and finding it hard to breathe
- Tummy ache and vomiting
- Dizziness or collapse

Sometimes an allergic reaction can be so severe, that a person with allergies will need emergency medicine (EpiPen®) quickly and then they need to go to hospital by ambulance

This is called anaphylaxis which is the most severe type of allergic reaction



Unfortunately there is no cure for allergies. The only way a person with allergies can prevent a reaction is to avoid what they are allergic to.

How can you help?





Take allergies seriously

- 1. Never share your food with them unless they can read the ingredients themselves
- 2. Ask them what they're allergic to and what you can do to help
- 3. Get help from an adult if someone with allergy feels sick, even if they don't want you to get help
- 4. Don't tease, trick, bully or joke about their allergy



What can you do to help when a friend has a severe allergic reaction?

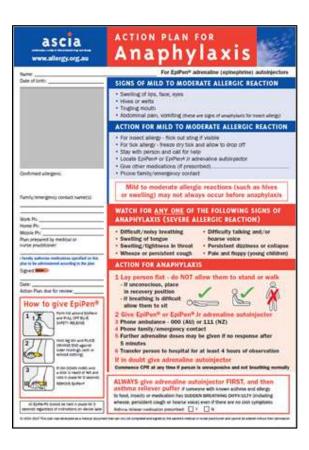
- Immediately get help from an adult
- If no adult is nearby, a friend should run to get one ASAP
- The person having an allergic reaction should stay where they are and lay on the ground(or sit on ground if it's hard to breathe) while an adult quickly brings the emergency medicine to them - they should NOT stand or walk



What can you do to help when a friend has a severe allergic reaction? cont.

- If the person having an allergic reaction has their emergency medicine (EpiPen®) with them, they should give it to themselves immediately if they're able or it should be given by someone else if they are too unwell
- The ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis is an emergency response plan and instructions should be followed







Further information:

250K – an allergy aware project for teens and young adults **250k.org.au**

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia allergyfacts.org.au

Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) allergy.org.au



