

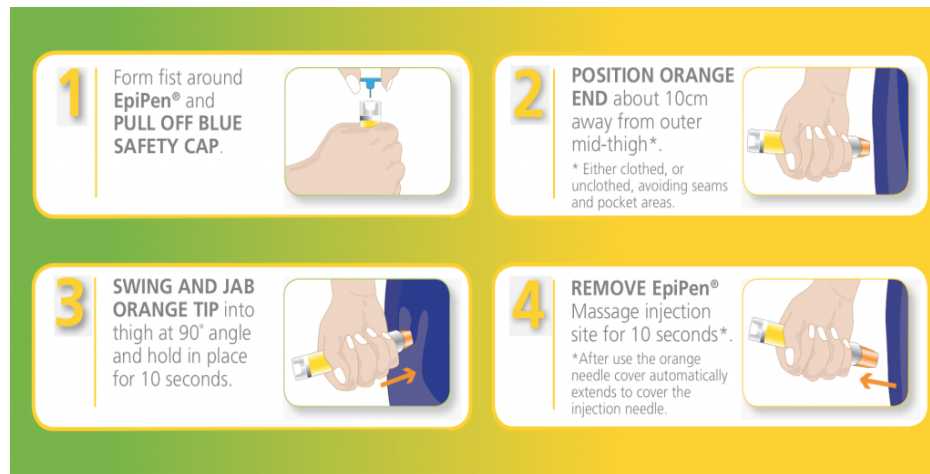
Anaphylaxis

Is a severe, life-threatening reaction, which can cause:

- Swollen face, mouth, or throat
- Trouble breathing
- Racing pulse
- Shock or death

***If any of these symptoms occur, or a reaction is becoming progressive, then you should seek medical help immediately.**

If you have ever had a severe reaction, then you should always carry an Epi-Pen in case you react to the allergen again. An Epi-Pen can be prescribed by your healthcare provider.

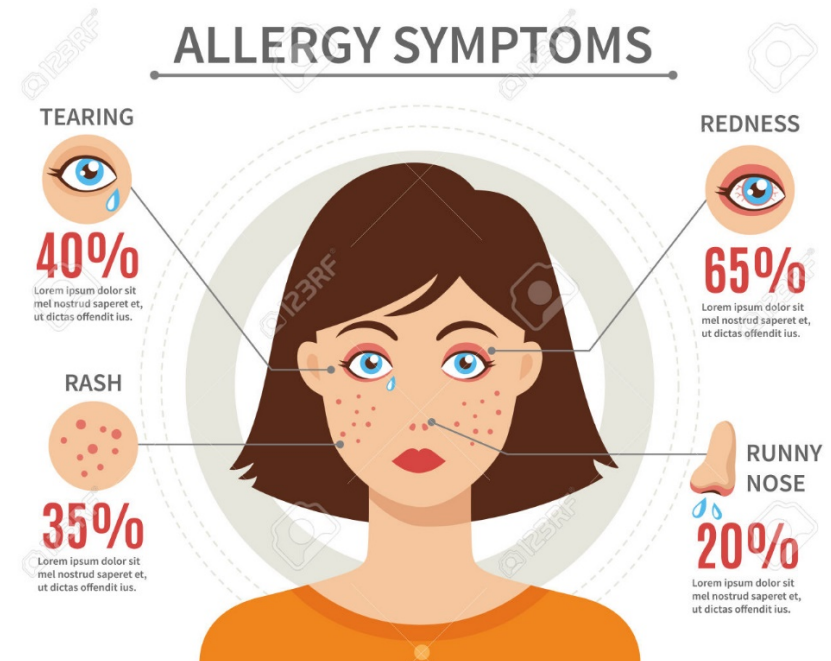


What are Allergies?

An **allergy** is an over-reaction by your immune system to a foreign substance that does not bother most people. The reaction can be minor, causing nasal congestion, to severe causing respiratory distress.

Common Allergens (agents causing reaction):

- Environmental - Dust, Pollen, Mold
- Food: Milk, Nuts, Shellfish
- Other: Medicines, Latex, Detergent



Signs of Allergies

- Nasal congestion
- Itchy, watery eyes
- Skin rashes, like eczema or hives
- Upset stomach, diarrhea

Treatment for Chronic Allergies

Proper treatment of seasonal allergies has been shown to *decrease sinus infections, reduce asthma exacerbations, and reduce the number of sick visits* to a healthcare provider throughout the year.

If you have allergies, you should talk to your healthcare provider about the treatment regimen that is right for you.

Common Treatment Regimens can include any or all of the following:

1. A 24-hour antihistamine, such as Zyrtec, Claritin, or Allegra. You should only take one medication from this class per day.
2. A nasal steroid such as Flonase or Nasonex. Decongestant sprays, such as Afrin, are not meant for daily use and should be avoided.

3. A leukotriene inhibitor, such as Singulair, requires a prescription. This medication is recommended for people who have asthma.

Note: Decongestants can raise blood pressure and are associated with an increased use of antibiotics for sinus infections; talk to your provider before adding a decongestant to your allergy regimen.

The best management for allergies is prevention. Avoid exposure to an allergen.

What if I am having an allergic reaction for the first time?

The first time you have an allergic reaction, you should take an anti-histamine, like Benadryl, and seek immediate medical help. Severe reactions can occur with even the first allergic reaction.



Repeated exposure to allergens can magnify the reaction. What first caused a mild reaction can lead to a severe reaction at the next exposure.

