

Medical Management of Vaccine Reactions in Children and Teens

All vaccines have the potential to cause an adverse reaction. To minimize adverse reactions, patients should be carefully screened for precautions and contraindications before vaccine is administered. Even with careful screening, reactions can occur. These reactions can vary from trivial and inconvenient (e.g., soreness, itching) to severe and life threatening (e.g., anaphylaxis). If reactions occur, staff should be prepared with procedures for their management. The table below describes procedures to follow if various reactions occur.

Reaction	Symptoms	Management
Localized	Soreness, redness, itching, or swelling at the injection site	Apply a cold compress to the injection site. Consider giving an analgesic (pain reliever) or antipruritic (anti-itch) medication.
	Slight bleeding	Apply an adhesive compress over the injection site.
	Continuous bleeding	Place thick layer of gauze pads over site and maintain direct and firm pressure; raise the bleeding injection site (e.g., arm) above the level of the patient's heart.
Psychological fright and syncope (fainting)	Fright before injection is given	Have patient sit or lie down for the vaccination.
	Extreme paleness, sweating, coldness of the hands and feet, nausea, light-headedness, dizziness, weakness, or visual disturbances	Have patient lie flat or sit with head between knees for several minutes. Loosen any tight clothing and maintain an open airway. Apply cool, damp cloths to patient's face and neck.
	Fall, without loss of consciousness	Examine the patient to determine if injury is present before attempting to move the patient. Place patient flat on back with feet elevated.
	Loss of consciousness	Check the patient to determine if injury is present before attempting to move the patient. Place patient flat on back with feet elevated. Call 911 if patient does not recover immediately.
Anaphylaxis	Sudden or gradual onset of generalized itching, erythema (redness), or urticaria (hives); angioedema (swelling of the lips, face, or throat); severe bronchospasm (wheezing); shortness of breath; shock; abdominal cramping; or cardiovascular collapse	See "Emergency Medical Protocol for Management of Anaphylactic Reactions in Children and Teens" on the next page for detailed steps to follow in treating anaphylaxis.

Supplies Needed

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Aqueous epinephrine 1:1000 dilution, in ampules, vials of solution, or prefilled syringes, including epinephrine auto-injectors (e.g., EpiPen). If EpiPens are to be stocked, both EpiPen Jr. (0.15 mg) and adult EpiPens (0.30 mg) should be available. <input type="checkbox"/> Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) injectable (50 mg/mL solution) and oral (12.5 mg/5 mL suspension) and 25 mg or 50 mg capsules or tablets <input type="checkbox"/> Syringes: 1–3 cc, 22–25g, 1", 1½", and 2" needles for epinephrine and diphenhydramine (Benadryl) <input type="checkbox"/> Pediatric & adult airways (small, medium, and large) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Sphygmomanometer (child, adult & extra-large cuffs) and stethoscope <input type="checkbox"/> Pediatric & adult size pocket masks with one-way valve <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol swabs <input type="checkbox"/> Tongue depressors <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight with extra batteries (for examination of mouth and throat) <input type="checkbox"/> Wrist watch <input type="checkbox"/> Tourniquet <input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone or access to an on-site phone |
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Emergency Medical Protocol for Management of Anaphylactic Reactions in Children and Teens

Signs and Symptoms of Anaphylactic Reaction

Sudden or gradual onset of generalized itching, erythema (redness), or urticaria (hives); angioedema (swelling of the lips, face, or throat); bronchospasm (wheezing); shortness of breath; shock; abdominal cramping; or cardiovascular collapse.

Treatment in Children and Teens

- If itching and swelling are confined to the injection site where the vaccination was given, observe patient closely for the development of generalized symptoms.
- If symptoms are generalized, activate the emergency medical system (EMS; e.g., call 911) and notify the on-call physician. This should be done by a second person, while the primary nurse assesses the airway, breathing, circulation, and level of consciousness of the patient.
- Administer aqueous epinephrine 1:1000 dilution (i.e., 1 mg/mL) intramuscularly; the standard dose is 0.01 mg/kg body weight, up to 0.3 mg maximum single dose in children and 0.5 mg maximum in adolescents (see chart below).
- In addition, for anaphylaxis, administer diphenhydramine either orally or by intramuscular injection; the standard dose is 1 mg/kg body weight, up to 30 mg maximum dose in children and 100 mg maximum dose in adolescents (see chart below).
- Monitor the patient closely until EMS arrives. Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), if necessary, and maintain airway. Keep patient in supine position (flat on back) unless he or she is having breathing difficulty. If breathing is difficult, patient's head may be elevated, provided blood pressure is adequate to prevent loss of consciousness. If blood pressure is low, elevate legs. Monitor blood pressure and pulse every 5 minutes.
- If EMS has not arrived and symptoms are still present, repeat dose of epinephrine every 10–20 minutes for up to 3 doses, depending on patient's response.
- Record all vital signs, medications administered to the patient, including the time, dosage, response, and the name of the medical personnel who administered the medication, and other relevant clinical information.
- Notify the patient's primary care physician.

Suggested Dosing of Epinephrine and Diphenhydramine

Age Group Dose	Weight * in kg	Weight (lbs)* in lbs	Epinephrine Dose 1 mg/mL injectable (1:1000 dilution) intramuscular	Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) 12.5 mg/5 mL liquid 25 and 50 mg capsules or tabs 50 mg/mL injectable
1–6 mos	4–7 kg	9–15 lbs	0.05 mg (0.05 ml)	5 mg
7–18 mos	7–11 kg	15–24 lbs	0.1 mg (0.1 ml)	10 mg
19–36 mos	11–14 kg	24–31 lbs	0.15 mg (0.15 ml)	15 mg
37–48 mos	14–17 kg	31–37 lbs	0.15 mg (0.15 ml)	20 mg
49–59 mos	17–19 kg	37–42 lbs	0.2 mg (0.2 ml)	
5–7 yrs	19–23 kg	42–51 lbs	0.2 mg (0.2 ml)	30 mg
8–10 yrs	23–35 kg	51–77 lbs	0.3 mg (0.3 ml)	
11–12 yrs	35–45 kg	77–99 lbs	0.4 mg (0.4 ml)	40 mg
13 yrs & older	45+ kg	99+ lbs	0.5 mg (0.5 ml)	50–100 mg

*Dosing by body weight is preferred.

These standing orders for the medical management of vaccine reactions in child and teenage patients shall remain in effect for patients of the _____ until rescinded or until _____.

name of clinic *date*

Medical Director's signature _____ Effective date _____

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics. Passive Immunization. In: Pickering LK, ed. *Red Book: 2006 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases*. 27th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2006: 64–66.
American Pharmacists Association, Grabenstein, JD, *Pharmacy-Based Immunization Delivery*, 2002.

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