

Allergic reaction

- Refers to spectrum of hypersensitivity reactions including urticaria, angioedema, anaphylaxis and anaphylactoid reactions
- Simple reactions involving only the skin are **NOT** termed anaphylaxis

What elements in the history are *essential*?

Features of impending anaphylaxis

- Lump in throat, voice hoarseness, swelling of lips, tongue
- Dizziness, lightheadedness, syncope
- Chest pain, breathlessness
- Abdominal pain or cramps, nausea/vomiting

What dangerous differentials should I not miss?

Asthma, croup, epiglottitis, foreign body aspiration

Hereditary angioedema

What should I look out for on examination?

Resp: Angioedema of tongue/lips, stridor, voice hoarseness, wheezing.

CVS: Hypotension, tachycardia

Derm: Urticaria (raised generalized erythema)

GI: Abdominal pain, distension, diarrhoea, vomiting

What tests should I do?

Allergies are a clinical diagnosis, lab tests are pointless

What treatment should I institute?

Symptomatic Rx - antihistamines and analgesia (if stings etc.)

Remove sting if present

Steroids only necessary in food allergies

Can the patient go home if symptoms have improved?

Yes

What outpatient management is appropriate?

Anti-histamines

Steroids (0.5mg/kg) for 3 days only if food allergy

Dermatology/ immunology appointment for recurrent cases or children with first onset reactions