



 Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

## A l l e r g i c   R e a c t i o n   T r e a t m e n t

### S e l f - C a r e   a t   H o m e

Avoid triggers! If you know you have an allergic reaction to peanuts, for example, do not eat them. Go out of your way to avoid foods prepared with or around peanuts (see Food Allergy).

Self-care at home is not enough in severe reactions. A severe reaction is a medical emergency.

- Do not attempt to treat or "wait out" severe reactions at home. Go immediately to a hospital emergency department.
- If no one is available to drive you right away, call 911 for emergency medical transport.
- For more information on what to do in a severe reaction, see Anaphylaxis.

Small reactions with mild symptoms usually respond to nonprescription allergy medications.

- An oral antihistamine, such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl). Caution – These may make you too drowsy to drive or operate machinery safely. They can affect concentration and interfere with children's learning in school. Nonsedating antihistamines are now available over the counter and include loratadine (Claritin). These medications should be taken for only a few days.
- For rashes, an anti-inflammatory steroid cream such as hydrocortisone

For small, localized skin reactions, try cold, wet cloths or ice. Try applying a bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel.

### M e d i c a l   T r e a t m e n t

Generally, medication is the treatment of choice after the allergen is removed. For more information on removing environmental allergies from your home, see Allergy-proof your home.

Very severe reactions may require other therapy, such as oxygen for breathing difficulties or intravenous fluids to boost blood pressure in anaphylactic shock. Patients with very severe reactions usually require hospitalization.

### more information from eMedicineHealth

- [When to Seek Medical Care](#)
- [Exams and Tests](#)
- [Next Steps](#)
- [Prevention](#)
- [Outlook](#)

For more information, read the complete article, Allergic Reaction (<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=59357>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

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