Recognizing and Responding to Anaphylaxis

How to recognize anaphylaxis

Healthcare personnel should consider anaphylaxis when patients present with generalized signs or symptoms such as **hives, serious or life-threatening symptoms** (e.g., hypotension, respiratory distress, or significant swelling of the tongue or lips), or **symptoms that involve more than one body system**.

**Respiratory:**
- sensation of throat closing
- stridor (high-pitched sound while breathing)
- shortness of breath
- wheeze, cough

**Gastrointestinal:**
- nausea
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- abdominal pain

**Cardiovascular:**
- dizziness
- fainting
- tachycardia (abnormally fast heart rate)
- hypotension (abnormally low blood pressure)

**Skin/mucosal:**
- generalized hives
- itching
- swelling of lips, face, or throat

**Neurological:**
- agitation
- convulsions
- acute change in mental status
- sense of impending doom (a feeling that something bad is about to happen)

What to do if you suspect anaphylaxis

- Assess airway, breathing, and circulation
- Administer epinephrine
- Call Emergency Medical Services (EMS)
- Place in supine position

Detailed information can be found in the Interim Considerations: [Preparing for the Potential Management of Anaphylaxis After COVID-19 Vaccination](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)