

Drug Reactions

Drug Hypersensitivity reactions are unpredictable and not dose-dependent, they lead to objective reproducible symptoms or signs at a dose tolerated by normal people, they can be either immune mediated such as IgE or T cell mediated reactions or non-immune mediated. Symptoms of serious reactions include: Angioedema, Urticaria, Wheeze, throat tightness, gastrointestinal disturbance, hypotension, decreased oxygen saturations and confusion and desquamating rashes.

Information Required

- History of drug(s) ingested and dose(s), including drug brand name.
- Document symptoms and severity and interval between exposure and reaction.
- Medication list at time of event, including over the counter, illicit and homeopathic drugs.
- Past medical history (including asthma)
- Reason for prescribed drug use, and likelihood that it or related drugs will be required again.
- Known prior drug allergies

Investigations Required

- Tryptase within 3 hours of reaction if possible
- Blood testing for specific IgE is not done until 6 weeks post anaphylaxis.
- For penicillin/cephalosporin allergy this should include Specific IgE to Amoxicilloyl, Penicilloyls and Cefaclor
- For isolated angioedema this should include C4 level



Fax referrals to Allergy/Clinical Immunology Service

Flinders Medical Centre

Fax: 08 8204 7483

Red Flags

Red flags should prompt immediate GP referral to **Emergency Department**

-  Desquamation or rash and eosinophilia and liver function testing abnormalities
-  Cardiorespiratory compromise

Suggested GP Management

- Cease suspected drug,
- Urgent immunology referral for desensitisation if medication is required urgently.
- Use alternative drug if available
- Inform patients of potential cross-reactivity including over the counter medications (eg NSAID reactions)
- Medic alert for life-threatening reactions

Clinical Resources

- MJA Practice Essentials – Allergy 3. Drug hypersensitivity Francis C K Thien Med J Aust 2006; 185 (6): 333-338

General Information to assist with referrals and the Referral templates for FMC are available to download from the SALHN Outpatient Services website www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/SALHNoutpatients

Version	Date from	Date to	Amendment
1.0	September 2014	September 2016	Original
2.0	October 2018	October 2021	Revised – No Change Required