










WHAT IS ...

AN ALLERGY?






What is an Allergy?


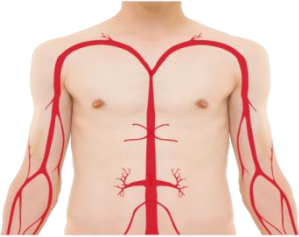
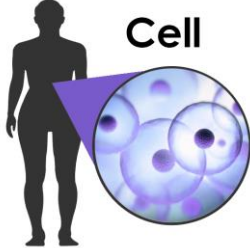


	<p>An allergy is a response from your immune system to things that are harmless such as pollen, food or dust mites.</p>
	<p>For most people, these are not a problem for them.</p>
	<p>The immune system of allergic people sees them as threats which can lead to a bad reaction.</p>
	<p>This can be small like itching.</p>
	<p>In bad cases, it can cause Anaphylaxis which can be fatal.</p>

	<p>Allergies are very common.</p>
	<p>For some people, allergies can be life-long.</p> <p>For others, they only affect a person at some point in their life.</p>
	<p>They are common in children.</p>
	<p>They can go when children get older.</p>






The Most Common Causes of Allergies

	Pollen from trees and grass
	Dust mites and mold
	Food such as peanuts, milk and eggs.
	Pets, furry animals and insects such as wasps and bees.
	Some medicines



What happens when you have an allergic reaction?

	<p>When a person touches something they are allergic to, the allergen enters the body.</p> <p>An allergen is a substance that makes the body react badly.</p>
	<p>Inside the body, the allergen makes contact with the antibodies.</p>
 <p>Cell</p>	<p>Body cells respond by releasing chemicals.</p>
	<p>These chemicals can cause swelling and itching.</p>
	<p>An allergic reaction happens very quickly, a few minutes after contact.</p>



Common symptoms of an allergic reaction






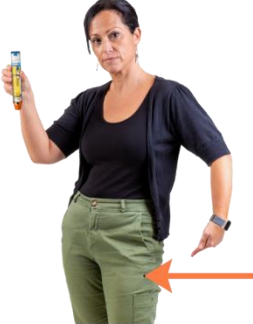
	Sneezing/runny nose
	Coughing, wheezing and shortness of breath
	Rash/Hives and swelling.
	Itchy eyes, ears, throat, lips or mouth
	Sickness, vomiting or diarrhea

Anaphylaxis (Severe Allergic Reaction)

	<p>Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening allergic reaction.</p>
	<p>It is a medical emergency.</p> <p>It can be very serious if not treated quickly.</p>

If someone has symptoms of Anaphylaxis:

	<p>Use an adrenaline injector if the person has one – if you know how to use it correctly.</p>
	<p>Call 999 for an ambulance.</p> <p>Say that the person is having an allergic reaction.</p>

	<p>Lay the person down and raise their legs.</p>
	<p>If they're having breathing difficulties, sit them up so they can breathe.</p>
	<p>If they're pregnant, lie them down on their left side.</p>
	<p>If the symptoms don't get better, give another adrenaline injection after 5 minutes.</p>
	<p>You should only do this if they have a 2nd injector.</p>
	<p>If you're having a reaction, you can follow these steps if you're able to.</p>



With the right support, people with learning disabilities can overcome things they find difficult and live the life they choose!

This easy read booklet has been created by Easy Health (GENERATE, registered charity number 1069548).

All Photos by PHOTOSYMBOLS.

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