



Are you  
allergy  
aware?

**250K** AN ALLERGY  
AWARENESS  
PROJECT

national  
allergy  
strategy



**ascia**  
australasian society of  
clinical immunology and allergy

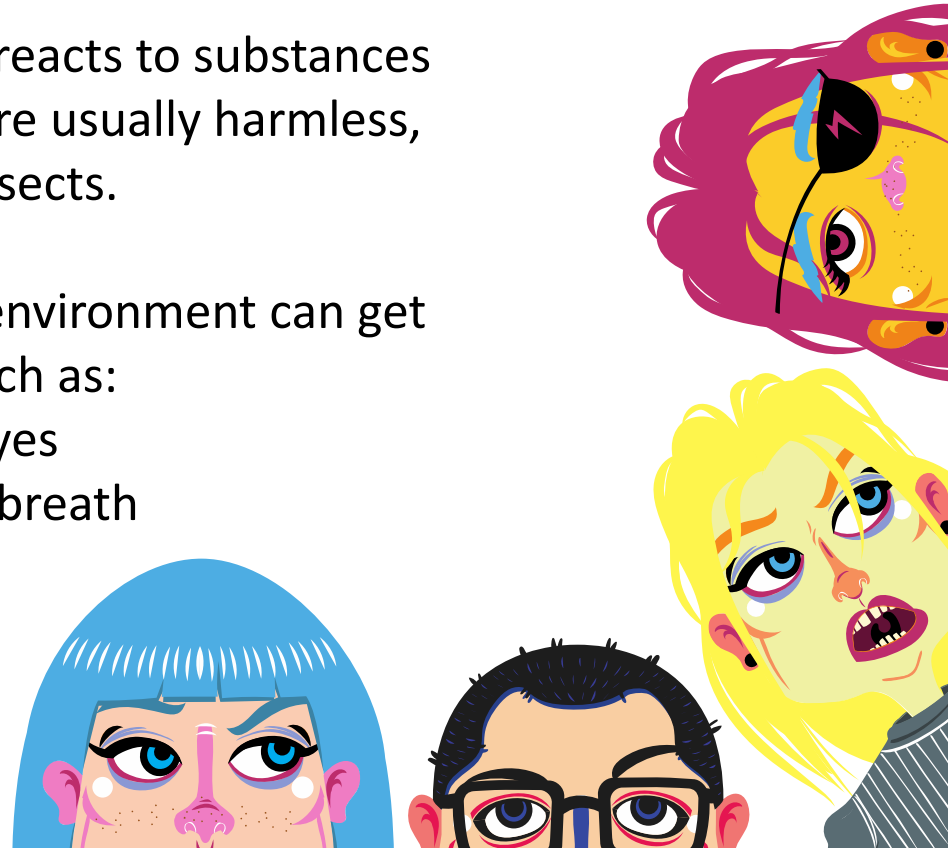


# What is allergy?

An allergy is when the immune system reacts to substances (allergens) in the environment which are usually harmless, such as food, pollens, dust mites and insects.

People with allergies to triggers in the environment can get hay fever and asthma like symptoms such as:

- Runny nose, sneezing and itchy eyes
- Cough, tight chest and get out of breath



# Why do people have allergies?

- Sometimes it's because their parents have allergies
- Most of the time we just don't know
- Lots of research is being undertaken to try to find out why
- You can't catch an allergy from someone else



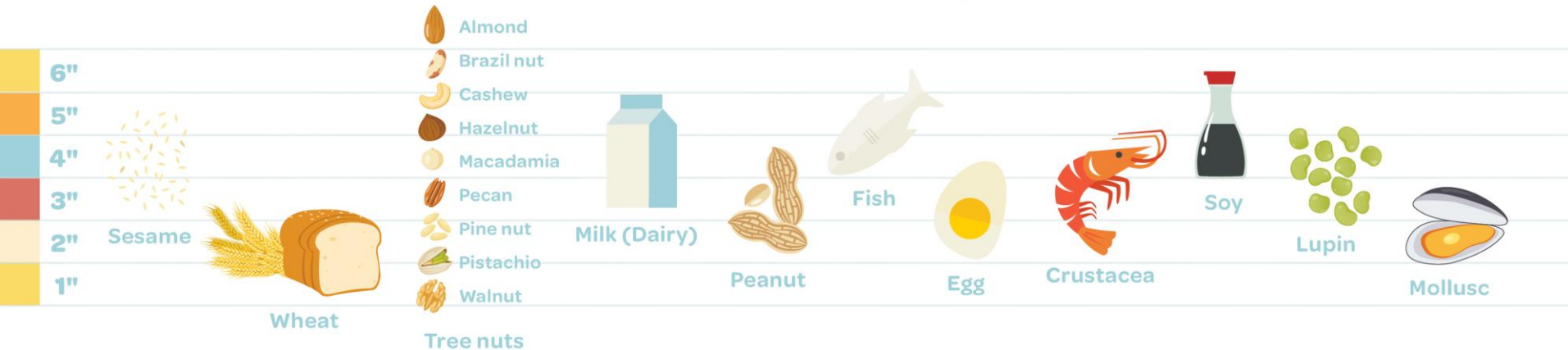
# People can be allergic to:

- Food
- Insects (e.g. bees, wasps, ants) and ticks
- Medicines (including alternate medicines and illegal drugs)
- Things in the environment (e.g. dust mite, pollen, pet dander, mould)



Most people know about peanut allergy, but lots of other foods can cause allergic reactions that are just as severe.

## The usual suspects





Symptoms of an allergic reaction can include:

- Itchy red skin and lumps called hives
- Face swelling
- Bad coughing and finding it hard to breathe
- Tummy ache and vomiting
- Dizziness or collapse

Sometimes an allergic reaction can be so severe, that a person with allergies will need emergency medicine (EpiPen® or Anapen®) quickly and then they need to go to hospital by ambulance

This is called anaphylaxis which is the most severe type of allergic reaction



Unfortunately, there is no cure for allergies. The only way a person with allergies can prevent a reaction is to avoid what they are allergic to.

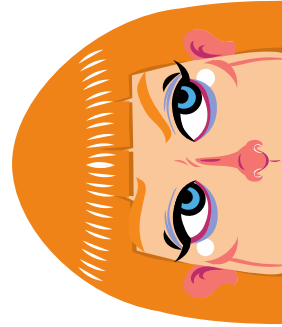
How can you help?





# Take allergies seriously

1. Never share your food with them unless they can read the ingredients themselves
2. Ask them what they're allergic to and what you can do to help
3. Get help from an adult if someone with allergy feels sick, even if they don't want you to get help
4. Don't tease, trick, bully or joke about their allergy



# What can you do to help when a friend has a severe allergic reaction?

- Immediately get help from an adult
- If no adult is nearby, a friend should run to get one ASAP
- The person having an allergic reaction should stay where they are and lay on the ground (or sit on ground if it's hard to breathe) while an adult quickly brings the emergency medicine to them - they should NOT stand or walk



# What can you do to help when a friend has a severe allergic reaction?

- If the person having an allergic reaction has their emergency medicine (EpiPen® or Anapen®) with them, they should give it to themselves immediately if they're able or it should be given by someone else if they are too unwell
- The ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis is an emergency response plan and instructions should be followed

**250K** AN ALLERGY AWARENESS PROJECT

The image displays two EpiPen autoinjectors and two ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis forms. The top EpiPen is orange and the bottom one is white. The forms are for EpiPen and Anapen, respectively, and provide detailed instructions for use and emergency response steps.

**ASCIA ACTION PLAN FOR Anaphylaxis**  
 For use with EpiPen® adrenaline (epinephrine) autoinjectors

**SIGNS OF MILD TO MODERATE ALLERGIC REACTION**

- Swelling of lips, face, eyes
- Hives or welts
- Tringling mouth
- Abdominal pain, vomiting, - these are signs of anaphylaxis for insect allergy

**ACTION FOR MILD TO MODERATE ALLERGIC REACTION**

- For insect allergy - flick out sting if visible
- For tick allergy [...] seek medical help or [...] freeze tick and let it drop off
- Stay with person, call for help and locate adrenaline autoinjector
- Give antihistamine if prescribed
- Phone family/emergency contact

**Mild to moderate allergic reactions (such as hives or swelling) may not always occur before anaphylaxis**

**WATCH FOR ANY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OF ANAPHYLAXIS (SEVERE ALLERGIC REACTION)**

- Difficulty or noisy breathing
- Swelling of tongue
- Difficulty talking or hoarse voice
- Persistent dizziness or collapse
- Swelling or tightness in throat
- Pale and floppy (young children)
- Wheeze or persistent cough

**ACTION FOR ANAPHYLAXIS**

- LAY PERSON FLAT - do NOT allow them to stand or walk
  - on left side if pregnant, place in recovery position
  - if breathing is difficult allow them to sit with legs outstretched
  - Hold young children flat, not upright
- GIVE ADRENALINE AUTOINJECTOR
- Phone ambulance - 000 (AU) or 111 (NZ)
- Phone family/emergency contact
- Further adrenaline may be given if no response after 5 minutes
- Transfer person to hospital for at least 4 hours of observation

**IF IN DOUBT GIVE ADRENALINE AUTOINJECTOR**  
 Commence CPR at any time if person is unresponsive and not breathing normally

**ASCIA ACTION PLAN FOR Anaphylaxis**  
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**ALWAYS GIVE ADRENALINE AUTOINJECTOR FIRST, and then**  
 always give 100% oxygen if available with oxygen delivery and allow to beat. Insects or medication has SUDDEN BREATHING DIFFICULTY (including wheeze, persistent cough or hoarse voice) even if there are no other symptoms. Administer relevant medication immediately. [ ] Y [ ] N

**Always Adrenaline is automatically injected (e.g. in a thumb phone your local poison information centre). Continue to follow this action plan until the person with the allergic reaction.**

© ASCIA 2014. This plan was developed as an educational document and is not intended to be printed and signed by the patient or used for compliance and should be shared with all relevant parties.

## Further information:

250K – an allergy aware project for teens and young adults

**250k.org.au**

Allergy & Anaphylaxis Australia

**allergyfacts.org.au**

Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA)

**allergy.org.au**

