

*Eden Aldrich, RCP*

**STANDING ORDER**

**ANAPHYLAXIS**

**Signs and Symptoms of acute anaphylaxis are variable but may include:**

**I. CARDIAC**

- A. Rapid, weak pulse
- B. Hypotension
- C. Irregular heartbeat

**II. RESPIRATORY**

- A. Rapid, shallow breathing
- B. Tightness in throat/chest
- C. Hoarseness/stridor
- D. Congestion/sneezing, wheezing, cough

**III. CUTANEOUS**

- A. Flushing/pallor/cyanosis
- B. Urticaria (hives)

**IV. OTHER**

- A. Swelling of lips and tongue, difficulty swallowing
- B. Anxiety/restlessness/apprehension/a “sense of doom”
- C. Feeling of warmth
- D. Irritability
- E. Diaphoresis
- F. Headache
- G. “Tingling skin”
- H. Itching (pruritis)/edema
- I. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain
- J. Sensation of fainting

Symptoms usually occur within the first 30 minutes following the exposure to whatever event has precipitated the reaction. The most serious reactions are shock and respiratory distress. These two reactions may be followed by: cyanosis, rising temperature, convulsions, and loss of consciousness. The appearance of hives (urticaria) may precede life threatening circulatory and respiratory collapse.

If some of the symptoms are present, follow the directions below:

- A. Call 911, start treatment, do not wait for symptoms to subside or increase.
  - B. Lay client flat, keep warm. Assess ABCs: **A=AIRWAY, B=BREATHING, C+CIRCULATION**. If blood pressure is low, or person appears to be in shock, elevate legs above heart. If breathing difficulty seems to be the main problem (and BP is normal), elevate head.
  - C. If Respiratory or Cardiac arrest occurs, begin CPR immediately.
  - D. If it is known that an injection, medication, food or other substance has appeared to cause reaction, Registered Nurses may Use Epi Pen 0.3 mg on inmate in thigh at right angle to leg.
  - E. If the antigen causing the reaction was given by injection, or the site of the insect bite/sting can be visualized; administration of epinephrine into that site will slow the absorption of the antigen.
  - F. If no improvement occurs within 7-10 minutes, and the EMTs have not yet arrived, repeat the dose of epinephrine.
  - G. Give oxygen via nasal cannula (not to exceed 6 liters per minute) or mask (not to exceed 10-12 liters per minute).
  - H. Record vital signs a minimum of every 10-15 minutes. Record all medication and dosages given.
- V. Report interventions, vital signs and medications given to the EMTs before transport of client.**