

RULE 59: EMERGENCY RESPONSE TO LIFE-THREATENING ASTHMA OR SYSTEMIC ALLERGIC REACTIONS (ANAPHYLAXIS)

Emergency Response Team

As a team these must happen quickly with administration of epinephrine the primary goal in a life-threatening breathing emergency. Assess for signs and symptoms of a life-threatening breathing emergency. Assign team member to begin incident report documentation.



CALL 911

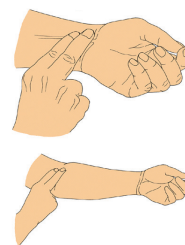
Inform operator that epinephrine will be administered for a life-threatening breathing emergency.



ADMINISTER EPIPEN®

Administer EpiPen® for anyone over 50 lbs and EpiPen® Jr. for anyone under 50 lbs. *Count to ten before removing injector from thigh.*

DO NOT DELAY!



CHECK AIRWAY, BREATHING, RESPIRATORY RATE AND PULSE

Check ABC's:

- Is the airway open?
- Are they still breathing?
- Can you find a pulse?



ADMINISTER CPR, IF INDICATED



NEBULIZE WITH ALBUTEROL

May repeat nebulizer treatment twice if no improvement in breathing. Continue to monitor breathing.



CONTACT PARENT/ GUARDIAN

Have someone contact parent or guardian.



PATIENT GOES TO ER

Send used auto-injector and as much information as possible regarding patient's health history and what happened.

Life-Threatening Asthma Symptoms

~ any of these symptoms may occur ~

- Chest tightness
- Wheezing
- Severe shortness of breath
- Retractions (sucking in of chest or neck)
- Cyanosis (turning blue)
- Hunched-over position
- Change in mental status – agitation, anxiety, lethargy
- Breathlessness – speaks in 1-2 word phrases or complete inability to speak

Life-Threatening Anaphylaxis

~ any of these symptoms may occur ~

- **Skin**
 - Warmth – warm to touch
 - Itching
 - Tingling of underarms/groin area
 - Flushing
 - Hives
- **Abdominal**
 - Pain
 - Nausea & vomiting
 - Diarrhea
- **Oral/Respiratory**
 - Sneezing
 - Swelling of face (lips, mouth, tongue, throat)
 - Lump/tightness in the throat
 - Hoarseness
 - Difficulty inhaling
 - Shortness of breath
 - Decrease in peak flow meter reading
 - Wheezing reaction
- **Cardiovascular**
 - Headache
 - Low blood pressure (shock)
 - Lightheadedness
 - Fainting
 - Loss of consciousness
 - Rapid heart rate
 - Ventricular fibrillation (no pulse)
- **Mental Status**
 - Apprehension
 - Anxiety
 - Restlessness
 - Irritability

How Bad Is It? Severity of Asthma Episodes			
	MILD episode	MODERATE episode	SEVERE episode
Breathless	When walking Can lie down	When talking Prefers sitting	At rest Hunched forward
Can only speak in:	Sentences	Phrases	Words
Retractions <i>(accessory muscles)</i>	Usually not	Usually	Usually
Wheeze	Moderate, often only at end of expiration	Loud	Usually loud
Peak Flow (if used)	>80% of personal best	60-80% of personal best	<60% of personal best
Respiratory Rate/min	Normal to increased	Increased	Often > 30/min
Pulse/min	<100/min	100-120/min	>120/min

Normal Rates of Breathing in Awake Children		Guide to Normal Heart Rate in Children	
Age	Normal Rate	Age	Normal Rate
2-10 years/old	20-25/min	2-10 years/old	70-110/min
10 yrs to adult	16-20/min	10 yrs to adult	55-90/min

Source: GINA/Global Strategy for Asthma Management & Prevention 2006
Hockenberry MJ and D Wilson (eds.) Wong's Nursing Care of Infants and Children, 8th edition.
St. Louis: Mosby Elsevier. 2007