



# First Aid Response

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## Common Medical Emergencies





# Learning Outcomes

## **Knowledge Objectives** (by the end of this Unit, you will be able to...)

1. List the common medical emergencies (CMEs)
2. Identify the key manifestations (origin, nature and cause) of each CME
3. State the key signs and symptoms of each CME
4. Outline methods to assess patients for each CME

## **Attitudinal Objectives** (by the end of this Unit, you will be able to...)

1. Demonstrate an ability to empathise with the regimes that patients may need to follow for their underlying conditions and be able to describe the risks of stereotyping
2. Demonstrate an ability to respond to the needs of patients who have failed to adhere to their usual medication regimes in a non-judgemental and compassionate manner showing appreciation for the effects of fear

## **Skills Objectives** (by the end of this Unit, you will be able to...)

1. Demonstrate how to care for patients who have suffered a CME according to CPGs



# Common Medical Emergencies (CME's)

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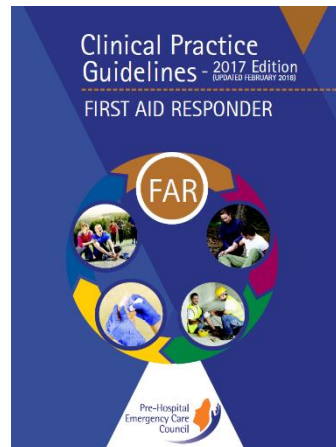
1. Inadequate breathing (Asthma)
2. Low/high blood sugar (Diabetes)
3. Seizures
4. Poisoning/Overdose
5. Fainting
6. Cardiac Chest Pain (Angina)
7. Anaphylaxis



# Resources?



Health Service  
Executive





# What do we want to know!

- Asthma
- Diabetes
- Seizures
- Poisoning/Overdose
- Fainting
- Cardiac Chest Pain (Angina)
- Anaphylaxis





# 1. Asthma

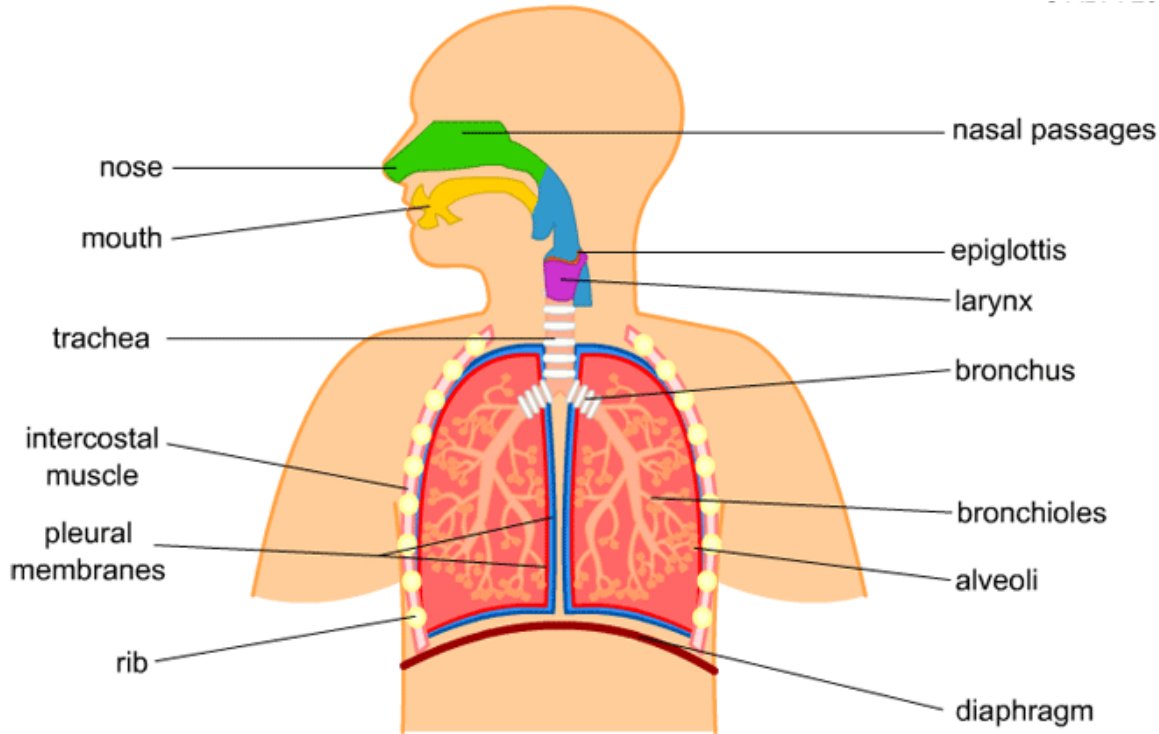
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- To understand Asthma, we must first look at;
- Parts of the Respiratory System
  - Functions of the Respiratory System
  - Respiratory Arrest



# Parts of Respiratory System



**Breaths per min?**  
**12-20**

**Muscles involved?**

- **Diaphragm**
- **Intercostal**

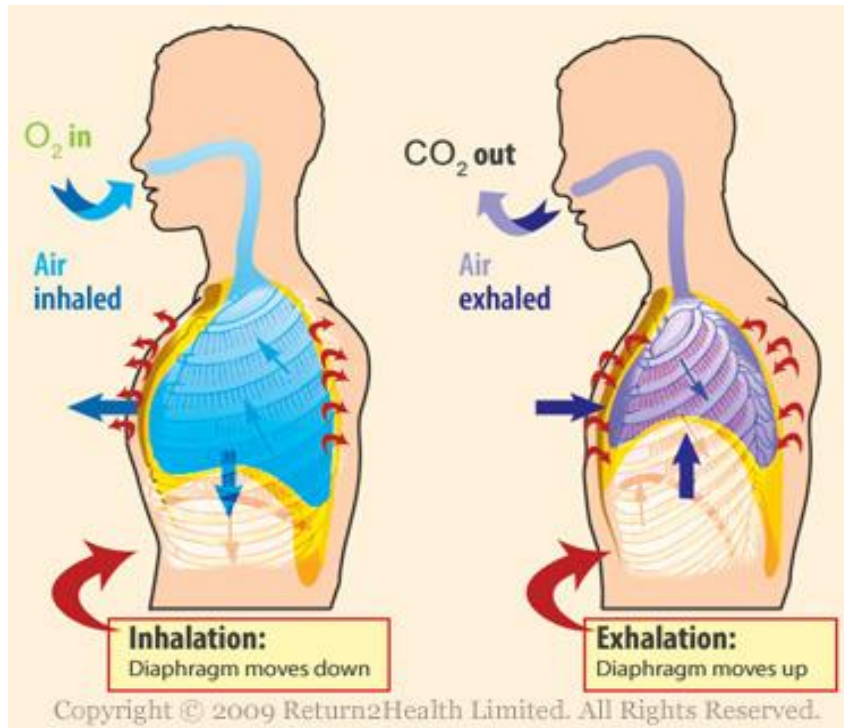
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# Functions of Respiratory System

- Provide Oxygen and remove Carbon Dioxide



**Air in?**

Oxygen = 20%

Nitrogen = 79%

**Air out?**

Oxygen = 16%

Nitrogen = 79%

**Group Work**



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# Respiratory Arrest

## Respiratory Arrest

- No Breathing
- No Rise & Fall of Chest
- Skin colour changes

*Signs?*



## Treatment

- Scene safety
- Help! 112/999
- Open airway
- CPR.....

*Signs?*

## Adequate Air Exchange

- Normal Breathing (age)
- Normal rhythm
- Effort normal

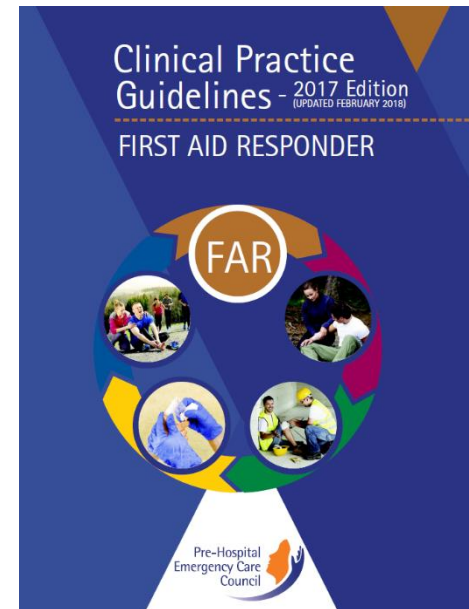




# PHECC CPGs

- FAR CPGs (2017)
  - Asthma

CPGs  
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# Asthma – Video

Watch out for:

**What is Asthma?**

**Origin?**

**Bronchospasm?**

**Cause?**



Link to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S04dci7NTPk>



# Question Time!

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Q1. What is Asthma?

Q2. How does Asthma originate?

Q.3 What is Bronchospasm?

Q.4 What effect does it have on the body?



# Asthma – Video

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Watch out for:

How is it caused?

Triggers?



Link to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7EDo9pUYvPE>



# Question Time!

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Q1. How is Asthma caused?

Q.2 What are the triggers?





# Question Time!



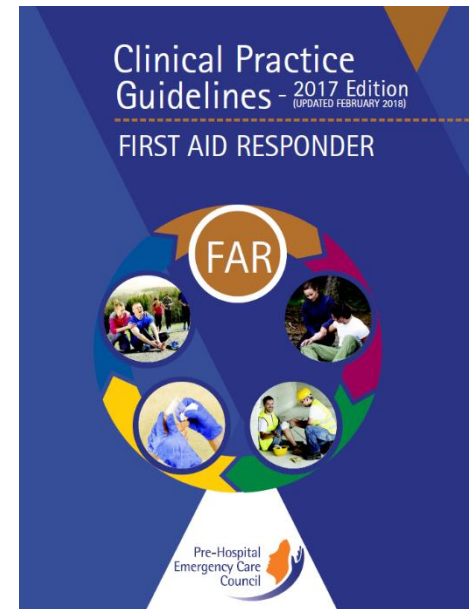
Q. List the Signs & Symptoms of someone with Inadequate Breathing?



# PHECC CPGs

- FAR CPGs (2017)
  - Glycaemic Emergency

CPGs  
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# Question Time!

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Q1. What is Diabetes?

Q2. How does Diabetes originate?

Q.3 How is it caused?

Q.4 What effect does it have on the body?





# Signs & Symptoms

## High Blood Sugar

- Gradual onset
- Sweet Breath
- Frequent urination
- Increased hunger & thirst
- Rapid breathing & pulse\*
- Warm Dry Skin



\*Rapid breathing & pulse can present as a symptom of both



# Signs & Symptoms

## Low Blood Sugar

- Sudden onset
- Poor coordination
- Unusual Behaviour
- Cool Clammy Skin
- Rapid breathing & pulse\*
- Altered Level of Consciousness



\*Rapid breathing & pulse can present as a symptom of both



# Treatment of a Diabetic patient

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## Conscious Patient

- Make comfortable
- Offer sweet drink or food
- Patient may have their own
- Reassure & Monitor patient
- Advise to visit GP
- If required call 112/999

## Unconscious Patient

- Scene Safety
- ABC
- Call 112/999
- Breathing – Recovery Position
- Reassure and Monitor

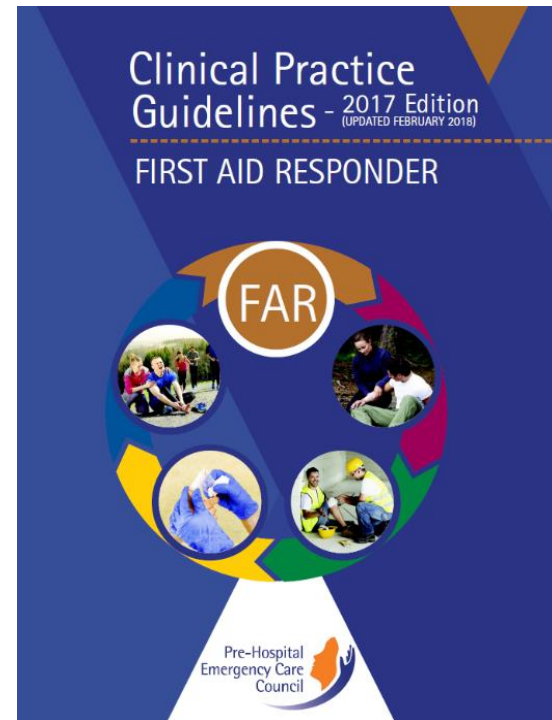




# PHECC CPGs

- FAR CPGs (2017)  
Seizure/Convulsion

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# What is a Seizure?

- Sudden surge of electrical activity in the brain
- Usually affects how a person appears or acts for a short time
- Seizures can be a symptom of many different disorders that can affect the brain





# Seizures – Causes?

- Epilepsy
- Low Blood Sugar
- High Temperature
- Stroke
- Infection
- Brain Tumour
- Poisoning
- Head injury
- Alcohol
- Drugs







# Seizures – Epilepsy

2 types.....

1. Simple Partial (Minor)
2. Generalised – Tonic Clonic (Major)





# Simple Partial Seizures

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- Consciousness is not impaired
- The seizure is confined to either rhythmical twitching of one limb or part of a limb
- Or unusual sensations, such as pins and needles in a distinct part of the body



# Generalised Seizure

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- The most dramatic form is the tonic-clonic convulsive seizure (still sometimes called a "major" or "grand mal" seizure)
- The person becomes rigid, then falls to the ground and there is jerking of all four limbs
- Breathing is laboured and there may be incontinence of urine
- Not all of these features are always seen



# Question Time!



Q1. What are Seizures?

Q2. How do Seizures originate?

Q.3 How are they caused?

Q.4 Name 2 types of Epileptic Seizures?

Q.5 What effect does it have on the body?

Q.6 What are the signs & symptoms?

Q.7 How do we treat a patient suffering a seizure?



# Seizures...

Watch out for:  
**Signs & Symptoms?**  
**Treatment?**



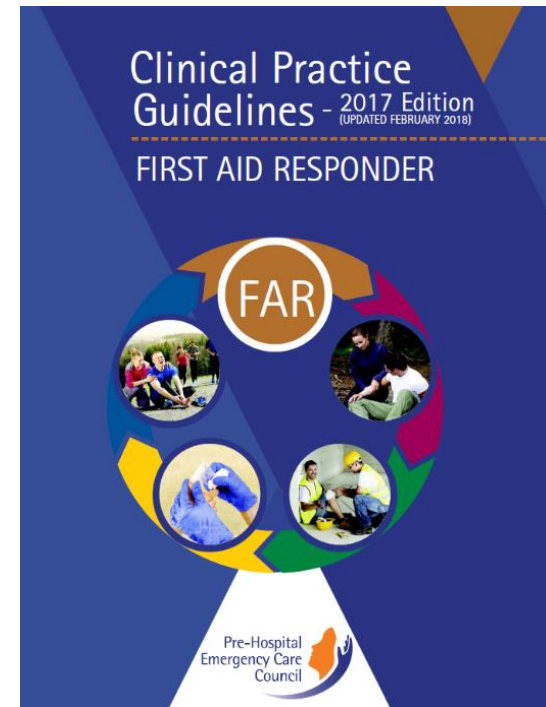
Link to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WP4NZcfadIk>



# PHECC CPGs

- FAR CPGs (2017)  
Poisons

CPGs  
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## 4. Poisoning/Overdose



**Substances that have  
the potential to destroy  
life or harm health**



# Routes of entry of Poison?

- Ingestion
- Inhalation
- Injection
- Absorption







# Signs & Symptoms

**What are the signs & symptoms of Poisoning?**



- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Pain
- Breathing difficulties
- Seizure
- Confusion
- Unconsciousness



# Treatment

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- Scene Safety
- Call 112 (or 999)
- Identify source – Identification sheet
- Inhalation = fresh air
- Ingestion – DO NOT induce vomiting!
- Check Level of consciousness AVPU
- Recovery Position – if necessary

Why not?





# Poisons

- Toxic Chemicals



**Useful Number:**  
National Poisons  
Information Centre,  
Beaumont Hospital

Tel: 01-8092166  
(24 hour service)  
[www.poisons.ie](http://www.poisons.ie)

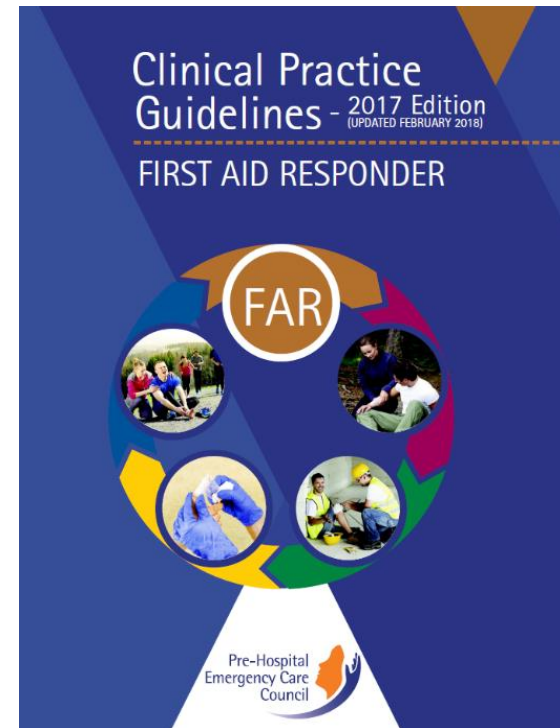


# PHECC CPGs

- FAR CPGs (2017)

Fainting

CPGs  
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# Fainting

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Sudden and temporary  
loss of consciousness  
caused by lack of Oxygen  
to the brain



# Signs/Symptoms & Treatment

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## Signs & Symptoms?

- Slow Pulse
- Dizziness
- Pale, Cool Clammy Skin
- Blurred Vision
- Limb Weakness
- Sweating

## Treatment?

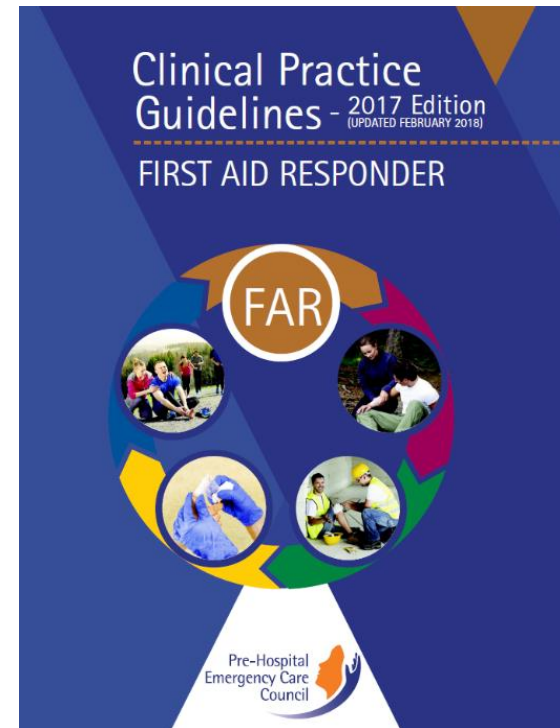
- Lie patient down, raise legs
- Support & reassurance
- Move onlookers
- Sit patient up slowly
- Fresh Air
- If repeated incidents refer patient to GP



# PHECC CPGs

- FAR CPGs (2017)  
Cardiac Chest Pain

CPGs  
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## 6. Angina

Severe chest pain caused by a reduced blood flow to the heart. It is a warning that there is a problem with the blood supply to your heart.

**Essentially, your heart  
isn't getting enough  
oxygen-rich blood**

**What is Angina?**







# Signs/Symptoms & Treatment

## Signs & Symptoms?

- Chest Pain
- Pain spreading to the arms, neck, jaw and around the back
- Nausea
- Shortness of breath
- Extreme fatigue
- Weakness
- Abdominal pain

## Treatment?

- Rest
- On medication for this?
- Reassurance
- Monitor vitals
- Be prepared to call 999/112

## Group Work



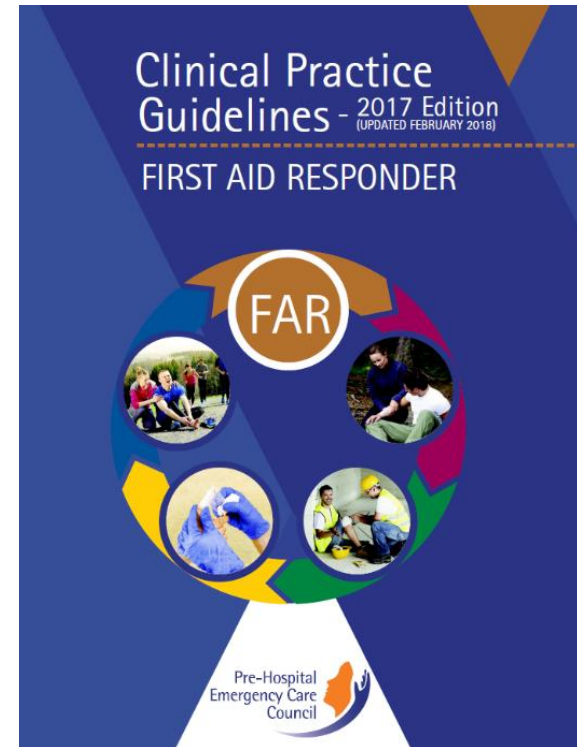


# PHECC CPGs

- FAR CPGs (2017)

## Anaphylaxis

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# 7. Anaphylaxis

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Anaphylaxis is a serious, life-threatening allergic reaction

**It can have a sudden onset and rapid progression**

**What is Anaphylaxis?**





# Signs/Symptoms & Treatment

## Signs & Symptoms?

- Difficulty breathing
- Diminished consciousness
- Changes to your skin (red, blotchy skin or itchy skin)
- Dizziness
- Swelling (lips, hands, feet)
- Confusion
- Weak & rapid pulse

## Treatment?

- Treat as a medical emergency! (999/112)
- On medication for this?
- Sit them down
- Reassurance
- Monitor vitals



# Assessment

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- What effect does Asthma have on the body?
- How do you treat a conscious patient with Diabetes?
- List at least 5 causes of Seizures
- What are the signs & symptoms of Poisoning?
- What are the signs & symptoms of Fainting?
- Define Angina
- What is Anaphylaxis?



# Summary

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- Common Medical Emergencies
  - Asthma
  - Diabetes
  - Seizures
  - Poisoning/Overdose
  - Fainting
  - Angina
  - Anaphylaxis
- Signs & Symptoms of each
- Treatment of each