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Guideline for the management of anaphylaxis



Anaphylaxis is the most severe allergic reaction a person can suffer from. It is therefore essential that both healthcare professionals and patients at risk be able to recognise it quickly and initiate the most appropriate action. GALAXY, or "Guidelines for Action in Anaphylaxis", developed by consensus among several professional medical societies and coordinated by professionals from Hospital Vall d'Hebron, aims to solve the lack of this type of guide in Spain. It is adapted to the characteristics of the population and the country's diagnostic and therapeutic resources, thus increasing chances of success in terms of dissemination activities among healthcare professionals.

Anaphylaxis is the most severe allergic reaction that a person can suffer. It is a generalised allergic reaction which is rapid in onset and which may cause death. This means that unlike other allergic processes that affect only one organ or system, such as urticaria that only affects the skin, symptoms observed in anaphylaxis involve at least two systems. In example, it could be an asthma attack and urticaria occurring simultaneously. In addition, anaphylaxis is considered a severe reaction. Although it is potentially life threatening, deaths are fortunately very infrequent.

But it is important that this small number is further reduced. It is therefore essential that both healthcare professionals and patients at risk of anaphylaxis are able to recognize the first symptoms of this reaction and to initiate the most appropriate action.

So far in Spain, a guideline for management anaphylaxis did not exist, and international European or global guidelines were used. But it is clear that a document in native language, adapted to the characteristics of the population and to the diagnostic and therapeutic resources of our country, is more likely to be successful in terms of dissemination among healthcare professionals. This is the aim of the publication of this guideline for management of anaphylaxis, also known by the acronym GALAXIA.

The guide describes the characteristics of anaphylaxis, the epidemiology, which are the most frequent causes, how to suspect its onset, what tests may help in the diagnosis and how to treat it. It also focuses on how to plan the long-term management, which must include an urgent referral to an allergists to study the possible cause, to evaluate what the patient should avoid and to receive training how to act in case of a new episode of anaphylaxis, including on the use of self-injectable adrenaline.

The aim of the authors is for GALAXY truly to help improve performance in severe allergic reactions.

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References

"Guideline for the management of anaphylaxis". Med Clin (Barc). 2011 Mar 26;136(8):349-355. Epub 2010 Dec 17.

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