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# Anaphylaxis: A Preventable Threat in a World of Rising Allergies

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As the global burden of allergies grows, so does the shadow of anaphylaxis—an acute, life-threatening hypersensitivity reaction that demands swift recognition and management. World Allergy Week 2025, led by the World Allergy Organization (WAO), brings the spotlight to this critical issue under the timely theme: "**Anaphylaxis: A Preventable Threat.**"

This year's campaign is not just a call for awareness; it is a charge to action—especially for allergists—to prevent avoidable tragedies through vigilance, education, and evidence-based care.

## A GLOBAL OVERVIEW: ANAPHYLAXIS IN NUMBERS

Anaphylaxis affects an estimated 1.6% to 5.1% of the population worldwide, with increasing prevalence in both developed and developing countries.<sup>1</sup> It accounts for up to 0.26% of overall hospital admissions.<sup>2</sup> Food remains the leading cause among children, while insect venom and drugs dominate in adults.

New data shows that despite better diagnostic tools, delayed epinephrine use and under-prescription of autoinjectors persist as major gaps.<sup>3,4</sup> In the Asia-Pacific region, including the Philippines, underreporting and lack of uniform guidelines complicate public health response.

## WHAT'S NEW IN ANAPHYLAXIS MANAGEMENT?

### 1. Updated WAO Diagnostic Criteria (2020)

The World Allergy Organization revised its criteria to improve early recognition. Notably, isolated respiratory symptoms after allergen exposure can now qualify as anaphylaxis, even in the absence of skin involvement—streamlining diagnosis in atypical cases.<sup>5</sup>

### 2. Biphasic Reactions and Observation Time

In majority of cases, after the anaphylactic reaction resolves, no subsequent reaction follows. However, symptoms may reoccur in some. This is known as biphasic anaphylaxis. Recent meta-analyses suggest that these biphasic reactions occur in approximately 4–6% of cases. Newer guidelines recommend individualized observation times—ranging from 4 to 24 hours—based on severity and comorbidities.<sup>6</sup>

### 3. Epinephrine First, Always

Despite its life-saving potential, epinephrine is still underused. A 2022 global survey showed that 30–45% of patients experiencing anaphylaxis do not receive epinephrine in time, often due to hesitancy, lack of access, or inadequate training.<sup>4</sup>

Initiatives like epinephrine ampules + syringe kits and training programs are being encouraged to increase access, especially in low-resource settings like the Philippines.

**Recently, a nasal spray form of epinephrine** was developed specifically for the **treatment of anaphylaxis**. It's designed as a **needle-free alternative** to traditional intramuscular (IM) epinephrine autoinjectors in adults and children aged 4 years and older who weigh 33 lbs or greater.<sup>7</sup>

## PREVENTION: OUR STRONGEST WEAPON

Preventing anaphylaxis requires a comprehensive strategy:

- **Accurate diagnosis** using validated skin tests and component-resolved diagnostics (CRD)
- **Trigger avoidance education** tailored for food, drug, insect, and latex allergies
- **Emergency action plans** individualized for each patient



- **Epinephrine autoinjector or epinephrine ampule prescription** with hands-on training for patients and caregivers
- **Public awareness campaigns** that destigmatize allergy and empower bystander intervention

In the Philippines, the **Philippine Society of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (PSAAI)** is strengthening its advocacy through allergy education and materials for the lay, in line with the World Allergy Week theme. It is also taking part in the APAPARI (Asia-Pacific Academy of Pediatric Allergy, Respiriology & Immunology) Anaphylaxis Registry to better understand the local triggers, symptoms and management strategies to ultimately help improve patient care.

## WORLD ALLERGY WEEK 2025: ADVOCACY IN ACTION

This year's campaign underscores a powerful truth: **anaphylaxis, while serious, is often preventable** with the

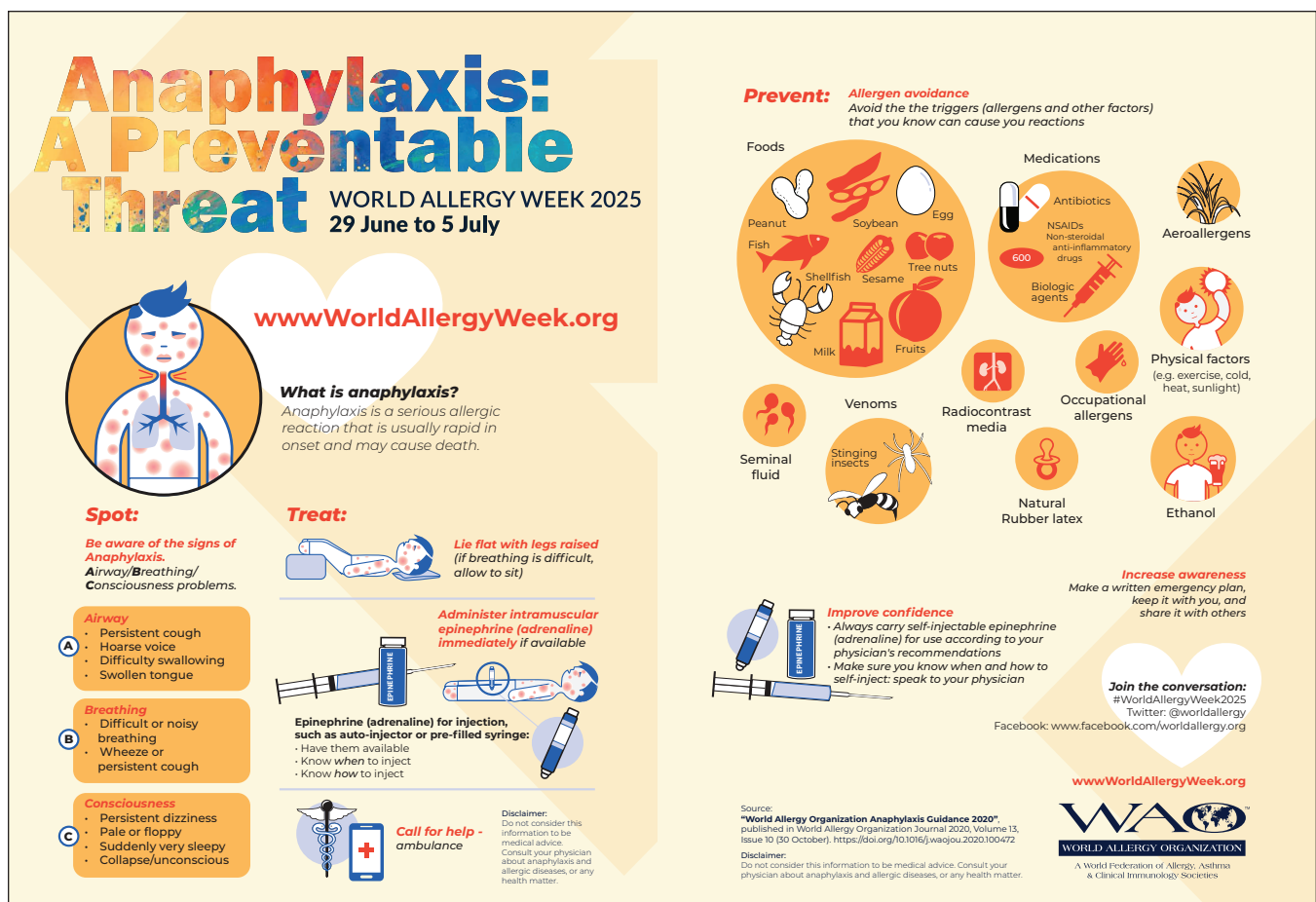
right systems in place. WAO urges allergists to amplify this message through:

- Lay lectures, as highlighted in the 2025 celebration of National Allergy Day this July
- Regular training sessions for emergency personnel
- Social media outreach emphasizing knowing your triggers and being prepared

Anaphylaxis is no longer a rare emergency—it is a daily reality in our clinics and communities. As allergists, our role extends beyond treatment—we are educators and advocates.

Let us leverage this year's theme not just to commemorate World Allergy Week—but to catalyze a year-round movement toward **prevention, early action, and equitable access** to care (Figure 1).

Because with the right knowledge and response, **anaphylaxis is not just treatable—it is preventable.**



**Figure 1.** Infographic from the World Allergy Organization summarizing key recommendations for the diagnosis and management of anaphylaxis. World Allergy Organization. WAO 2025 Anaphylaxis Infographic. [https://worldallergy.net/media/PDFs/WAO\\_2025\\_Anaphylaxis\\_Infographic\\_final.pdf](https://worldallergy.net/media/PDFs/WAO_2025_Anaphylaxis_Infographic_final.pdf). Accessed July 3, 2025. Reproduced with permission from the World Allergy Organization.

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