Drug Allergy

Your caregiver has diagnosed you as having suffered from a drug allergy. Drug allergies can cause many different symptoms including:

- Itching, hives, and other rashes.
- Breathing problems, swelling in the throat, wheezing.
- Weakness, fainting, fever, and muscle and joint pains.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Talk with your caregiver before taking any drugs, including over-the-counter drugs.
- Always alert any new caregiver about your allergy. Don't assume the caregiver is aware of your allergy.
- After taking a new drug in your doctor's office, always wait there for at least 15 minutes.
- If you suffered from hives or a rash:
  - To lessen itching, apply cold compresses to the skin, or take a cool bath.
  - Do not take hot baths or showers. This will aggravate the itching and rash.
  - Wear loose fitting clothes.
- If you suffered a ***severe*** allergic reaction:
  - An adult will need to stay with you for 24 hours in case *symptoms* (problems) return.
  - You will need to wear a medic-alert bracelet or necklace stating the allergy.
  - You and your family need to learn when and how to use an anaphylaxis kit or epi-pen.
  - If you have had a severe reaction before, always carry your anaphylaxis kit with you. Other family members should also know how to administer this in an emergency.
- You may return to your normal activities when the allergic symptoms are gone.

In most cases the symptoms of drug allergy are gone within a few days of stopping the medicine. Antihistamine or cortisone drugs may be prescribed to help relieve your symptoms. If you have a rash, stay out of the sun until the rash is completely gone. You may wish to carry a card or wear a special bracelet to notify others of your drug allergies. **Be sure to let your caregiver know about your drug reaction. Do not take this medicine, or any others closely related to it, in the future**.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- Your symptoms are not improving after stopping the medication.
- You have new symptoms.
- You have any other questions or concerns.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have difficulty breathing, or you are wheezing or have a tight feeling it your chest or throat.
- You have a swollen mouth, or have hives, swelling or itching *all over* your body.
- You develop uncontrollable vomiting or diarrhea.

THE ABOVE SYMPTOMS INDICATE A LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY. Have someone call 911 immediately!

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