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Would You Know the Symptoms of Life-Threatening Anaphylaxis?

Missoula, MT, February 10, 2011 – Many of the approximately 1,500 deaths in the U.S. each year due to anaphylaxis, a sudden, serious allergic reaction, could be prevented if more people knew the symptoms and the immediate treatment needed to survive.

To increase awareness of anaphylaxis, Missoula allergist Carl Thornblade, MD and Michelle Thornblade, PA-C have joined the national Anaphylaxis Community Experts (ACEs) educational program to present community awareness programs to schools, hospital grand rounds, PTA meetings, medical offices, Scouting organizations, EMS, fire and police departments, and more.

“The first line of treatment is early administration of epinephrine. Most fatalities from anaphylaxis occur outside the home, especially when treatment is delayed,” says allergist Carl Thornblade, MD. “Our goal is to show parents, teachers, school nurses, emergency responders and others how to recognize and respond to anaphylaxis symptoms the moment they begin. Our goal is to save lives.”

Anaphylaxis is a rapid-onset, whole-body, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. It can happen to anyone at any time, but is more commonly experienced among people with risk factors. There are three major risk factors for fatal anaphylaxis:

- Allergic reaction to food, stinging insects or medications
- Presence or history of asthma symptoms
- Delay in administration of epinephrine

The affected person may experience cardiovascular shock and/or serious respiratory compromise.

“What causes the allergic reaction? The answer may not be what you think. See an allergist. Get a strategy and reduce anxieties associated with anaphylaxis,” says Michelle Thornblade, PA-C. “Forty-seven states protect students’ rights to carry and use auto-injectable epinephrine. We’ve created resources to help them and families coordinate students’ needs.”

Every child at risk should have an anaphylaxis action plan on file with all schools and caregivers. The plan should list symptoms, state that immediate action can be life-saving and outline what to do in order of importance.

The ACE program will be presented in 150 communities by teams of local allergists and laypersons. ACE program objectives are to:

- Help patients, families and healthcare professionals identify who is at risk, and recognize signs and symptoms of life-threatening allergic reactions
- Recommend that auto-injectable epinephrine, the first line of treatment, be administered immediately once the symptoms have been identified, followed by emergency medical attention at the nearest hospital
- Develop prevention models that:
 - Promote identification and avoidance of allergens
 - Encourage patients with a history of anaphylaxis to consult with an allergist routinely
 - Provide an Anaphylaxis Action Plan to patients who are at risk of anaphylaxis
 - Refer patients with a diagnosis of anaphylaxis to an allergist, support-organizations and educational programs

For more information on the symptoms and treatment of anaphylaxis or to request an ACE awareness presentation for your group, contact Michelle Thornblade at 406-728-6472 or visit www.drthornblade.com, www.aanma.org/anaphylaxis and www.AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org.

The ACE program is a partnership of Allergy & Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics (AANMA) and the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (ACAAI), supported by Dey Pharma, LP.

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