

**B.A. Part – II**

**Paper – III**

**Dietetics**

**Unit – VIII**

**Topic – Drug Allergy**

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**A drug allergy is the abnormal reaction of your immune system to a medication. Any medication — over-the-counter, prescription or herbal — is capable of inducing a drug allergy. However, a drug allergy is more likely with certain medications.**

**The most common signs and symptoms of drug allergy are hives, rash or fever. A drug allergy may cause serious reactions, including a life-threatening condition that affects multiple body systems (anaphylaxis).**

**A drug allergy is not the same as a drug side effect, a known possible reaction listed**

**on a drug label. A drug allergy is also different from drug toxicity caused by an overdose of medication.**

## **Symptoms**

**Signs and symptoms of a serious drug allergy often occur within an hour after taking a drug. Other reactions, particularly rashes, can occur hours, days or weeks later.**

**Drug allergy signs and symptoms may include:**

- . Skin rash**
- . Hives**
- . Itching**
- . Fever**
- . Swelling**
- . Shortness of breath**
- . Wheezing**
- . Runny nose**
- . Itchy, watery eyes**

## **Anaphylaxis**

**Anaphylaxis is a rare, life-threatening reaction to a drug allergy that causes the widespread dysfunction of body systems. Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis include:**

- . Tightening of the airways and throat, causing trouble breathing**
- . Nausea or abdominal cramps**
- . Vomiting or diarrhea**
- . Dizziness or lightheadedness**
- . Weak, rapid pulse**
- . Drop in blood pressure**
- . Seizure**
- . Loss of consciousness**

**Other conditions resulting from drug allergy**

**Less common drug allergy reactions occur days or weeks after exposure to a drug and may persist for some time after you stop taking the drug. These conditions include:**

- **Serum sickness, which may cause fever, joint pain, rash, swelling and nausea**
- **Drug-induced anemia, a reduction in red blood cells, which can cause fatigue, irregular heartbeats, shortness of breath and other symptoms**
- **Drug rash with eosinophilia and systemic symptoms (DRESS), which results in rash, high white blood cell count, general swelling, swollen lymph nodes and recurrence of dormant hepatitis infection**
- **Inflammation in the kidneys (nephritis), which can cause fever, blood in the urine, general swelling, confusion and other symptoms**

## **Prevention**

**If you have a drug allergy, the best prevention is to avoid the problem drug. Steps you can take to protect yourself include the following:**

- **Inform health care workers. Be sure that your drug allergy is clearly identified in your medical records. Inform other**

**health care providers, such as your dentist or any medical specialist.**

- . Wear a bracelet. Wear a medical alert bracelet that identifies your drug allergy. This information can ensure proper treatment in an emergency.**