

# Allergic Reaction: Angioedema

If your eyes or lips suddenly become puffy or swollen you may be having an allergic reaction called Angioedema.

There are different types of Angioedema. One type is Acute Allergic Angioedema, which happens when your body reacts to an allergy trigger.

Acute Allergic Angioedema is swelling in the deep layers of your skin and mucous membranes. The swelling is caused by leaky blood vessels.

Liquid from your blood, called plasma, leaks into the tissue under your skin and mucus membranes. This causes these tissues to swell.

It can be caused by an allergy to certain foods, medicines, insect stings, and latex. It often affects your face, hands, feet, stomach, intestines, and airway.

Your symptoms can show up suddenly and may remain for up to 3 days.

They include: swelling in the face, mouth, tongue, back of the throat, vocal cords, genitals, and swelling of the hands, feet, and belly. Burning or pain in the swollen areas. And slight redness of the swollen areas.

It's like hives, which can happen at the same time. But angioedema doesn't cause your skin to itch like hives do.

You also may have belly pain and swelling. You may get diarrhea, or feel nauseous.

If angioedema comes on quickly, it can block your airway. If you have trouble breathing, get medical help right away.

Talk to your doctor about the symptoms you've had. Your visit will include a physical exam.

They will ask about your exposure to things like foods or stings before your symptoms started.

They will also ask you about the medicines you are taking.

You may also need blood or skin tests to rule out other causes for your swelling.

Most of the time angioedema is treated with medicines called antihistamines. You may also be given corticosteroids. They will help reduce your swelling.

But if you have trouble breathing or swelling in your throat, use epinephrine as soon as possible and call 911 or have someone call for you.

Once your angioedema has been treated, the next step is to make sure it doesn't come back.

You can do this by staying away from the foods, medications and other triggers that cause your allergic reactions.

If you're taking medicines for your symptoms, take them as directed.

And if you need to carry epinephrine, make sure you have the injectors or nasal spray with you at all times.

Let your family and friends know how to use them.

Work with your doctor to find the best treatment plan for you.