Figure 22-1  Substances that may cause allergic reactions.
Figure 22-2a  (A) Poison ivy, (B) poison sumac, and (C) poison oak.
Figure 22-2b  (A) Poison ivy, (B) poison sumac, and (C) poison oak.
Figure 22-2c  (A) Poison ivy, (B) poison sumac, and (C) poison oak.
Figure 22-3a  Signs of an allergic reaction may include (A) local swelling, (B) hives, and (C) facial swelling. (© Daniel Limmer)
Figure 22-3b  Signs of an allergic reaction may include (A) local swelling, (B) hives, and (C) facial swelling. (© Charles Stewart, MD)
Figure 22-3c  Signs of an allergic reaction may include (A) local swelling, (B) hives, and (C) facial swelling.
(© Edward T. Dickinson, MD)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYSTEM</th>
<th>ALLERGIC</th>
<th>ANAPHYLACTIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory complaints</td>
<td>Sneezing, cough, mild dyspnea</td>
<td>Moderate to severe dyspnea, tightness in chest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respiratory sounds</td>
<td>Wheezing</td>
<td>Wheezing, muffled voice, stridor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin texture</td>
<td>Local hives</td>
<td>Generalized hives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skin color</td>
<td>Possible pallor, little or no flushing of skin</td>
<td>Generalized pallor or flushed skin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swelling</td>
<td>Local swelling</td>
<td>Swelling of face, lips, eyes, tongue, mouth, injection site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vital signs</td>
<td>Normal or nearly normal vital signs</td>
<td>Tachycardia, hypotension, tachypnea, decreased oxygen saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental status</td>
<td>Mild, moderate, or severe anxiety</td>
<td>Feeling of impending doom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 22-2  Summary of Assessment and Care of Patients with Allergic or Anaphylactic Reactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epinephrine prescription</td>
<td>1. Standard treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of exposure</td>
<td>2. Consult physician for order to give epinephrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO epinephrine prescription*</td>
<td>1. Standard treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO epinephrine available</td>
<td>2. Transport</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In some areas, EMTs carry and administer epinephrine. If this is the case, a prescription for epinephrine is not necessary.
Scan 22-1 Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction

If a patient suffers a severe allergic reaction:

FIRST TAKE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

If a patient suffers a severe allergic reaction:
Scan 22-1 (continued)  Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction  FIRST TAKE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS  (1) Perform a primary assessment. Provide high-concentration oxygen by nonrebreather mask.
Scan 22-1 (continued) Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction

FIRST TAKE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

(2) Perform a secondary assessment. Obtain a SAMPLE history.
Scan 22-1 (continued)  Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction

FIRST TAKE STANDARD

PRECAUTIONS   (3) Take the patient's vital signs.
Scan 22-1 (continued)  Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction  FIRST TAKE STANDARD
PRECAUTIONS  (4) Find out if the patient has a prescribed epinephrine auto-injector and if it is prescribed for this patient or ensure that your protocols allow administering an epinephrine auto-injector you carry on the ambulance. Then check the expiration date and check for cloudiness or discoloration if liquid is visible. Contact medical direction.
Scan 22-1 (continued) Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction

FIRST TAKE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS  

(5) If medical direction orders use of the epinephrine auto-injector, prepare it for use by removing the safety cap. (Photo shows the EpiPen®.)
Scan 22-1 (continued)  Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction  FIRST TAKE STANDARD
PRECAUTIONS  (6) Press the injector against the patient's thigh to trigger release of the spring-loaded needle and inject the dose of epinephrine into the patient.
FIRST TAKE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

(7) Dispose of the used single-dose injector in a portable biohazard container.
Scan 22-1 (continued)  Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction  FIRST TAKE STANDARD
PRECAUTIONS  (8) If using the Twinject®, follow the manufacturer’s directions to remove color-coded caps and administer the first dose. Save the device and transport it with the patient in case the second dose it contains is needed later. (If needed, again follow the manufacturer’s directions to remove the color-coded cap and tab to administer the second dose.)
Scan 22-1 (continued) Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction
PRECAUTIONS (9) Document the patient’s response to the medication.

FIRST TAKE STANDARD
Scan 22-1 (continued) Assessing and Managing an Allergic Reaction  FIRST TAKE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS  (10) Perform a reassessment, paying special attention to the patient’s ABCs and vital signs en route to the hospital.
Scan 22-2  Epinephrine Auto-Injector
Figure 22-4a  Epinephrine auto-injectors: (A) EpiPen® and EpiPen Jr®; (B) the Twinject®, which also comes in child and adult sizes.
Figure 22-4b  Epinephrine auto-injectors: (A) EpiPen® and EpiPen Jr®; (B) the Twinject®, which also comes in child and adult sizes.