

The RCGP Curriculum

The Curriculum Topic Guides

Super-Condensed Topic Guides 2021



Allergy and Immunology

The Role of the GP and emerging issues in primary care

- The GP has the lead role in identifying underlying allergic symptoms that can be difficult to distinguish from the range of normality or other illness
- Anaphylaxis is a potentially life-threatening emergency which can often present in primary care. GPs have a role in not only managing emergencies but supervising the ongoing management of risk factors and prescribing.
- Allergy is a multi-system disease. GPs need to understand how to take an allergy focused clinical history and understand the differentiation of different types by appropriate testing and referral. This includes recognising and recording of food and drug sensitivities
- There is limited access to expertise and resources and this requires commissioning community-based services to take a wider role and develop integrated multidisciplinary pathways such as networks of specialist nurses, health visitors and dieticians, community pharmacists.
- Digital health and decision-support software can assist and enhance remote consultations
- Allergies are the commonest chronic disorders in childhood and the prevalence has increased dramatically in the last 25 years
- The role of immunotherapies for chronic allergic disorders is an expanding area of interest

- There are increasing numbers of people in the community with secondary immune deficiencies due to chemotherapy and biologics
- Immunisation and public health strategies have become vital in the management of emerging new disease variants such as Covid.

Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide

Symptoms and signs

- Anaphylaxis
- Angio-oedema
- Atopy – asthma, eczema and hay fever
- Drug reactions
- GI symptoms e.g. diarrhoea
- Urticaria and rashes.
- Recurrent infections as a marker of immune disorders and assessment of potential susceptibility

Common and important conditions

- Anaphylaxis, including doses of adrenaline and resuscitation
- Autoimmune conditions in primary care
- Drug allergies and their mechanisms
- Food allergies, including milk allergy (types e.g. IgE vs. non-IgE mediated, presentation, primary care management and referral)
- Occupational allergies such as latex allergy and contact allergies such as hair dye, metals, plants
- Pollen Food Syndrome
- Types of allergic reactions: immediate, delayed, possible mechanisms
- Venom allergy: referral and emergency management; the role of immunotherapy.

- Immune deficiency states (inherited, primary and acquired such as HIV, chemotherapy) as applicable to primary care particularly the different requirements for antibiotics
- Immunisation –
 - antibody test results used in guiding management of specific situations such as Covid, chickenpox in pregnancy, rubella immunisation, hepatitis B and C;
 - Covid testing, tracing, risk assessment and immunisation.
 - Routine primary childhood immunisation schedules, contraindications and adverse reactions
 - For occupational medicine such as healthcare workers and Hepatitis B
- Needle stick injuries and risk of Hepatitis B and C, HIV

- Skin manifestations of immune disease such as Kaposi's sarcoma
- Transplantation medicine as applicable to primary care particularly in management of organ transplants such as heart, lung, liver, kidney, cornea
- Indications and complications of transplantation e.g. immunosuppression and immunosuppressant drugs

Examinations and procedures

- Administration of adrenaline
- Risk assessment and prescribing of adrenaline devices
- Effective administration of topical nasal steroids and inhaler devices.

Investigations

- Allergy: skin patch and prick testing, specific IgE testing (blood and skin prick), exclusion and reintroduction in suspected non-IgE disease
- Immune disorders: immunoglobulin levels including IgG, IgM serology, and complement.

How this might be tested in MRCGP

AKT

- Management of covid risk and shielding precautions
- Indications and contraindications to routine immunisation in an immunosuppressed child
- Management of urticaria.

RCA

- A young woman is concerned that her lifestyle may have put her at risk of HIV and requests testing
- A parent requesting allergy testing for their child with eczema.
- A woman who works as a beautician with suspected contact dermatitis from cosmetic products.

WPBA

- Audit of the practice data on the appropriateness of prescribing adrenaline devices for patients at risk of anaphylaxis
- Reflective learning log entry about safety advice for a parent of a child with severe peanut allergy
- CEPS about administration of Covid immunisation.

How to learn this topic

This section describes *examples* of opportunities for learning.
We recognise that Covid-19 restrictions have significantly affected their accessibility



Other relevant specialties

- Paediatrics
- Dermatology
- Dietetics
- Gastroenterology
- Respiratory

- Public Health
- Infectious diseases
- Transplant medicine and Oncology

Acute

- Recognition and management of acute anaphylaxis
- Allergic reactions such as drug reactions
- Managing atopy including GI symptoms such as diarrhoea,
- Urticaria and rashes
- Management of acute illness in an immunocompromised patient
- Occupational exposure eg. Needlestick injury

Primary Care

- Day to day practice
- Out of hours in GP
- Outpatients/specialised clinics e.g. allergy clinics, dietetics
- Community child health clinics
- Public health attachments

Core themes

- **Communication and Consultation** – Breaking bad news, explaining diagnosis of conditions and negotiating management plans: severe allergies, immune disorders
- **Prescribing** – evidence-based prescribing and shared care medication such as immunologics, monitoring and side-effects
- **Teamworking** – specialist nurses, health visitors, dieticians, community pharmacists
- **Health promotion & prevention** – Immunisation uptake
- **Medico-legal/Ethics** - Capacity, requests for further investigations of potential allergic or immune disorders

Community/MDT

- Community specialists in allergy
- Health visitors
- Community pharmacists
- Community Dietitians

Tips

- Audit/QIP
- Significant Event Analysis
- Clinical governance
- Risk Assessment
- Dr as teacher
- Leadership
- BNF
- NICE guidelines