Epinephrine Auto-Injector Training in Private Practice
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Abstract

- Children with life-threatening food allergies are at risk of death from anaphylaxis due to incorrect administration of epinephrine.
- A review of the literature supports the need for primary care practices to develop protocols for epinephrine auto injector training for their patients with life-threatening food allergies that are at risk for anaphylaxis.
- Over 6 million US children (approximately 6%) have life-threatening food allergies and that number is on the rise.
- There are 150 deaths per year from anaphylaxis.
- With the number of children with life-threatening food allergies on the rise it is imperative that primary care providers provide the education necessary to keep them safe.

Discussion

- A potential risk for children with food allergies, the most common being peanuts, tree nuts, eggs, milk, shellfish, fish, wheat, and soy, is that accidental ingestion of the allergen will lead to anaphylaxis which could be fatal if not treated properly.
- Epinephrine is the first line treatment for anaphylaxis.
- Studies have shown that a large percentage of caretakers and/or patients themselves do not know how to properly use their epinephrine device.
- Most common mistakes were not holding in place for 10 seconds after triggering, failure to depress forcefully enough and failure to put the needle end on the thigh.
- Lack of knowledge on proper use of epinephrine is of serious concern because the outcome of incorrect administration of epinephrine could result in death.
- There is over-whelming evidence that incorporating review of epinephrine auto injector training during primary care visits will save lives.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the need to apply evidence-based research on epinephrine administration training into the care of children with life-threatening food allergies.
- Compare current epinephrine administration training process to current evidence-based practice on epinephrine auto injector training during primary care visits.
- Develop an epinephrine administration protocol for private practice.

Protocol

1. Identify child with a life-threatening food allergy.
2. At each yearly physical review action plan and proper use of epinephrine.
3. When completing medication administration forms review action plan and proper use of epinephrine.
4. Education is done by a nurse who meets with the patient/family to review the proper technique for administration of an epinephrine auto injector, along with reviewing the emergency action care plan.

References