

# DIPHENHYDRAMINE (BENADRYL)

## PHARMACOLOGY & MECHANISM OF ACTIONS:

- ❑ Antihistamine
- ❑ Diphenhydramine acts to block the histamine effects in an allergic reaction
- ❑ Anticholinergic, antiparkinsonian effects are used to treat acute dystonic reactions to antipsychotic drugs (ex: Haldol, Thorazine, Compazine). These reactions include oculogyric crisis (fixation of the eyeballs), acute torticollis (spasmodic contraction of the neck muscles), and facial grimacing and to treat extrapyramidal reactions (tremors, tics, changes in muscle tone and posture).
- ❑ May stimulate or depress CNS depending on individual response and dose given.

## INDICATIONS:

- ❑ Second line drug as an adjunct to epinephrine in the treatment of anaphylactic shock and severe allergic reactions.
- ❑ In mild to moderate allergic reactions, meaning they do not involve respiratory or cardiovascular compromise, given without epinephrine.
- ❑ Acute dystonic reactions to antipsychotic and antiemetic drugs

## CONTRAINDICATIONS:

- ❑ Allergy to Diphenhydramine
- ❑ Acute asthma attack (relative)
- ❑ Pregnancy (relative)

## ADMINISTRATION:

	ADULT		PEDIATRIC
EMT-I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 25-50 mg deep IM or slow IV/IO push</li> <li>❑ In severe anaphylaxis the dosage can be repeated once</li> </ul>	EMT-I	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ 1.0 mg/kg deep IM or slow IV push.</li> <li>❑ In severe anaphylaxis the dosage can be repeated once</li> </ul>

## PRECAUTIONS & SIDE EFFECTS:

- ❑ Hypotension when given IV
- ❑ Headache
- ❑ Drowsiness
- ❑ Paradoxical excitation (in children)
- ❑ Palpitations
- ❑ Wheezing (thickening of bronchial secretions)
- ❑ Blurred vision
- ❑ Pregnancy or asthma attack should not prohibit use of this medication in significant allergic reactions.
- ❑ May have synergistic effect when combined with alcohol or other CNS depressants.

## SPECIAL NOTES:

- ❑ Although useful in acute dystonic reactions, it is not an antidote to phenothiazine toxicity or overdose.
- ❑ Benadryl is indicated without epinephrine when there are signs/symptoms of allergic reactions not having cardiovascular compromise or significant respiratory distress. Commonly this will be in patients that c/o less serious hives, itching, difficulty swallowing, feeling like a lump is in their throat, and no shortness of breath, have good skin condition, no hypotension or any significant tachycardia.