

## The Difference Between Allergic and Injection Site Reactions

This handout will explain the difference between allergic and injection site reactions from getting a shot. Know the difference so you can avoid delays in treatment and use the medicine safely.

### Injection Site Reaction

All medicines given as a shot may cause a local reaction. Local refers to side effects only at the site of the shot. These include: redness, itching, pain, swelling, bruising, burning, or a small amount of bleeding. Site reactions are usually mild and go away within one to three days.

### To Reduce Your Chance of a Reaction

- Let the medicine sit at room temperature for up to 30 minutes before use. This helps reduce pain.
- Give diphenhydramine (Benadryl) 30 minutes before.
- Apply hydrocortisone cream after to help with itching, redness, and swelling. A pain reliever may also be used. Talk with your clinic to find one right for you.
- Allow the skin to dry after using the alcohol swab. If not dry, alcohol pushed in by the needle can cause burning.
- A cold pack applied to the site before and after may help to numb the area. Do not use a warm compress or heating pad as this will increase blood flow and may cause more pain.
- Make sure the shot is given in fatty areas by pinching the skin. A shot in a muscle hurts more than in fat.

- Change spots where the shot is given.
- Never give a shot in a bruise, scar, visible vein or areas with redness, swelling, or broken skin.
- Write down site reactions including all side effects and what you did to help them. Bring your notes to your next clinic visit.

### When to Call

Call the clinic if:

- Reaction does not go away after 3 days.
- The local reaction is severe. Severe means: blisters, redness that is larger than your fist (more than 2 inches across), severe bruising, bleeding, pain or itching.
- Site reactions seem to be getting worse with each shot.
- You have a rash across the bridge of your nose and cheeks.
- You see purplish-red spots anywhere on your body.

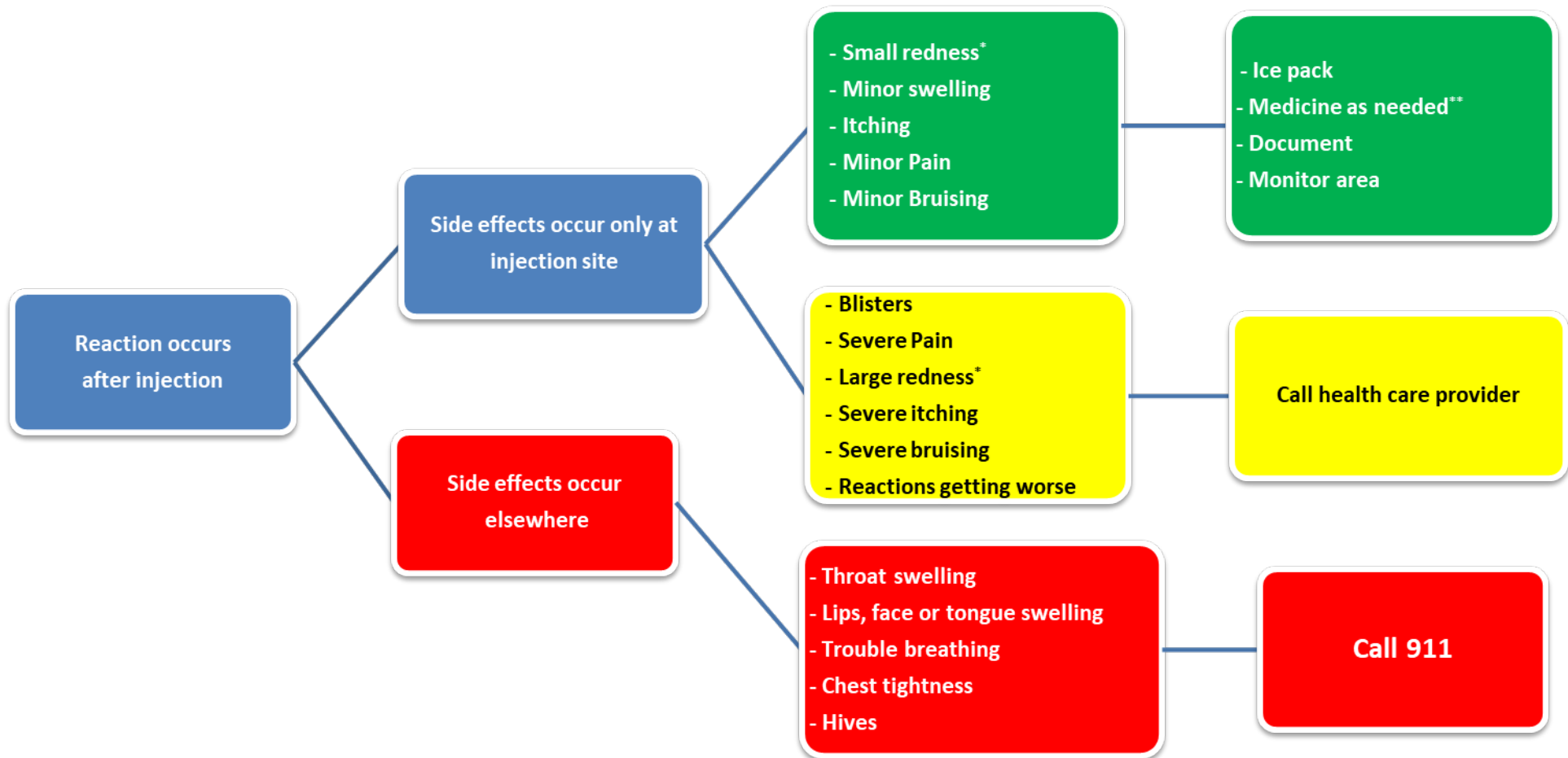
Call 911 if you have:

- Swelling of the face, lips or tongue
- Throat swelling or trouble breathing
- Chest tightness
- Hives

### Who to Call

Call your health care team at the Digestive Health Center: **608-890-5000**

# Reaction Action Plan



\*Small redness means no larger than 2" across or smaller than your fist

\*Large redness means larger than 2" across or larger than your fist

\*\* Medicines include:

- Over the counter pain product
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) or hydrocortisone cream applied afterwards for itching

References:

1. UpToDate. <http://www.uptodate.com/contents/search>. Accessed 6/23/16.
  - a. Adalimumab: Drug information.
  - b. Certolizumab pegol: Drug information.
  - c. Golimumab: Drug information.
2. American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology. Treatment of Local Injection Reactions. <http://www.aaaai.org/ask-the-expert/treatment-injection-reaction>. Accessed 6/23/16.
3. Mocchi G, Marzo M, Papa A, Armuzzi A, Guidi L. Dermatological adverse reactions during anti-TNF treatments: Focus on inflammatory bowel disease. *J Crohn's Colitis*. 2013;7:769-779