

What is drug hypersensitivity?

Drug hypersensitivity is a term people come across frequently, but might not know what it is. Do you know what it is?

If the answer is "no", this article might give you an idea.

Here goes: drug hypersensitivity is a reaction involving your immune system. It may cause symptoms such as rash, itchiness, hives, facial swelling, breathing difficulties, rapid falling blood pressure, and so on. The reactions are mostly mild, but sometimes they are severe, even life-threatening.

If you experience such symptoms, notify your doctor, or pharmacist straight away. The most effective way to deal with drug hypersensitivity is to stop using what you think is the offending medicine. Antihistamine and steroid are commonly used to relieve mild or near-severe symptoms.

Here are some useful tips on dealing with drug hypersensitivity:

- People affected by it should avoid the offending medication at all times.
- Tell all your health care providers that you are vulnerable to this affliction.
- If you develop the symptoms described above soon after taking a medication, consult your doctor straight away. You should also make notes of the symptoms, when you started feeling them, and the name of the suspected offending medication.
- If you should buy over-the-counter (OTC) medicines but not sure whether they contain ingredients that may trigger a hypersensitive reaction, seek clarification from your pharmacist.