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AWARENESS SAVES LIVES. BECOME AN ALLERGY ALLY.

The Second Report (2024/25)



The ready2reactuk initiative was initiated, funded and reviewed by Viatrix UK.



This initiative is supported by:



AWARENESS SAVES LIVES. BECOME AN ALLERGY ALLY.

Imagine you are with a friend in a coffee shop, and mid-conversation they seem irritated by something, rubbing their throat, complaining of tingling lips. Within minutes this escalates. You can noticeably see swelling on their face, hives on their skin, eyes watering, and then they have difficulty breathing. They can't get words out, you can see panic set in as they struggle to gasp for air.

Would you know what to do?

An anaphylactic reaction can escalate in minutes but so can your response. Being **Ready2React** can mean the difference between life and death. Understanding allergies isn't just for those who live with them – it's for all of us. **Know the signs. Be prepared. Be Ready2React.**

Ready2React is a disease awareness campaign funded and initiated by Viatris UK, a global healthcare company, and supported by leading UK allergy organisations including Allergy UK, Anaphylaxis UK, Benedict Blythe Foundation, British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (BSACI), and the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation. The overarching mission of the campaign is that no diagnosed allergy sufferer should die from an anaphylactic reaction.

As well as representation from the leading allergy charities and professional bodies in the UK, **Ready2React** is supported by leading allergy specialists, healthcare professionals, education professionals, and parents of patients with lived experiences of life with severe allergies. The report includes data from an IPSOS survey commissioned by Viatris UK and included 1000 participants who either carry or should carry an adrenaline pen for themselves, a child or an adult they care for. The survey was conducted in September 2024.

FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF THE READY2REACT ADVISORY BOARD:

Dr Glenis Scadding

Honorary Consultant Allergist and Rhinologist at the
Royal National ENT Hospital, London

*As Chair of the **Ready2React** Advisory Board, I am proud to present this vital second report, which brings to light the ongoing and urgent need for greater allergy awareness and preparedness. Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening condition that can strike without warning. Yet, with knowledge, quick action, and widespread public awareness, lives can be saved.*

*This report captures the lived experiences of those affected, the challenges they face, and the critical importance of public understanding and intervention. It serves as both a stark reminder and a hopeful call to action – one that urges every individual, organisation, and the general public to be **Ready2React**.*

Our collective goal is simple: no one should lose their life to an allergic reaction that could be prevented. By supporting education, improving access to life-saving treatment, and creating allergy-safe environments, we can make a profound difference.

**Together, let's become true Allergy Allies.
Let's be informed. Let's be prepared.
Let's be Ready2React.**

LIVING WITH AN ALLERGY

Allergies affect approximately 21 million adults across the UK, placing the country among the top three worldwide for the highest incidence of allergy.^{1,2} In fact, allergy prevalence is on the rise, with predictions that half of the European population will be living with an allergy by 2026.² So, it's likely that someone you know is or will be affected.

Allergic reactions can be triggered by food, insect stings, medications, latex or in rare cases, even exercise.¹ Living with an allergy can have a severe impact on daily life, taking away the freedom to enjoy things without worry – things many of us take for granted, like meeting friends at cafes, dining out at restaurants, or even going to work or school.

The real-life impact

The survey found that:

1 in 5 respondents say allergies affect their daily activities – most often impacting their ability to socialise.

4 out of 5 report that allergies have disrupted their ability to participate in social activities like parties, dining out, and holidays.

3 in 5 feel at risk running general errands.

More than half of respondents said that allergies affect their ability to work, while **1 in 2** report that it impacts their ability to attend school or university.



Living with the risk of a severe reaction could take a huge toll mentally on allergy sufferers with 18 per cent admitting to suffering from anxiety every day because of their allergy. Life can feel restrictive and things most people find pleasure in – such as holidays, social gatherings and new experiences – can be a cause of worry, stress and fear.

But it doesn't have to be this way

Greater awareness, understanding, and stricter allergy protocols in public places will not only save lives, but also change lives. By creating a more supportive environment, we can help those with allergies to live with more freedom, confidence, and joy.

***Allergy awareness is everyone's responsibility.
Let's be Ready2React.***

BE ALLERGY AWARE

Allergic reactions are caused by the sudden release of chemicals, including histamine, from cells in the body. The release is triggered by the reaction between the immune system antibodies (called Immunoglobulin E or IgE) and the food or substance (known as an allergen) it has been exposed to.

The body will have been exposed to the allergen on a previous occasion, although the person may not have been aware of this at the time. On that earlier occasion, the allergen was wrongly identified as a threat and antibodies were made against it, which means that on the next exposure, a serious reaction may occur. The mechanism is so sensitive that sometimes even tiny amounts of the allergen can cause an allergic reaction.⁴

Recognising the signs and acting quickly, by calling for help and administering adrenaline, can save a life.

The main symptoms to be aware of that may be a sign of a severe allergic reaction are:⁵



Swelling of the throat or tongue



Difficulty breathing or breathing very fast



Difficulty swallowing



Wheezing, coughing or noisy breathing



Feeling tired or confused



Feeling faint, dizzy or loss of consciousness



Skin that is cold to the touch or skin, lips, or tongue that have turned blue, grey or pale (for people with darker complexions, this may be easier to identify on the palms of their hands or soles of their feet)

If you or someone else experiences these symptoms, then acting quickly is critical.

REACT QUICKLY, REACT CORRECTLY

Adrenaline is the first line of treatment for anaphylaxis.⁶ If someone is experiencing an anaphylactic shock, adrenaline must be administered immediately via a pre-loaded injection device – which are prescribed based on patients' weight.

What to do in an emergency

- If prescribed an adrenaline pen, this must be used without delay
- Immediately dial 999 and request emergency medical help after administering adrenaline; say anaphylaxis (“ana-fill-axis”)
- If they are not already lying down, lie down flat and raise their legs (if pregnant, lie on left side); this will assist blood flow to the heart and vital organs
- Stay lying down even if they feel better
- If they struggle to breathe, gently sit them up – don’t change position suddenly; they should then lie down again as soon as possible
- Do not stand up – even if someone encourages them to
- Use a second dose of adrenaline if they haven’t improved after 5 minutes



Some people may experience a second anaphylactic reaction – known as biphasic anaphylaxis – between 6 and 12 hours after the first reaction. That’s why it’s important to continue looking out for symptoms, even after administering adrenaline.

Remember! Anyone who is at risk of anaphylaxis should always carry two in-date adrenaline pens with them.



Did you know? **1 in 6 people** are unaware of the free expiry alert services provided by all adrenaline manufacturers.

Be sure to remind your friends and family to register their medication with the manufacturer of their adrenaline pen.



TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Living with an allergy can be confusing and stressful, especially when it's not always clear how serious the risk really is. People often fall across a wide spectrum: some underestimate the danger, while others take extra precautions.

69% of people who should carry an adrenaline pen report **leaving home without one**.

Even more concerning, **33%** believe their allergy **isn't serious enough to carry one** at all times.



At the other end of the scale, the fear of a reaction can leave people feeling exposed and vulnerable in everyday life. In fact:

48% admit to **returning home** to retrieve their medication to manage their anxiety about having a reaction.

44% take **extra precautions** simply to feel safe when leaving the house.



These varied behaviours highlight just how uncertain living with an allergy can feel and why being prepared matters. Most public places, such as restaurants, entertainment venues, gyms, and workplaces, are not equipped with adrenaline pens, so it's important that those at risk carry their prescribed device, as every second counts when a person has an anaphylactic reaction.

ACCESS TO ADRENALINE

Raising awareness is the first step toward lasting change

- Increasing public understanding of severe allergies and anaphylaxis
- Building confidence in recognising the signs and responding quickly
- Implementing stricter allergy protocols in public places

Access to adrenaline pens in public places is widely perceived as important

- 72% of people surveyed feel that adrenaline pens should be available in public settings
- 1 in 2 say this would make them feel more at ease in their daily lives

Simply having adrenaline pens nearby isn't enough, we must ensure people know how to use them and confidently

- 47% of respondents said basic first-aid training may help with managing allergies effectively
- 70% believe that visible access to adrenaline pens could help raise public knowledge of anaphylaxis
- However, 45% expressed concerns about proper use or the potential for misuse

Partnering with leading UK allergy charities and professional bodies, we're united by a powerful mission: that no one diagnosed with an allergy or anaphylaxis loses their life because of it. Together, we're driving positive change through improved policies, better access to life-saving adrenaline pens, and increased education and awareness.

By empowering the allergy community and raising national awareness, we're building a safer, more supportive world for everyone living with allergies. With awareness, access, and action, we can all be Ready2React.

BE READY2REACT

Ready2React is here to shine a light on the real risks faced by people living with anaphylaxis every time they leave home without their adrenaline pen. We want to raise awareness, support the allergy community, and support the implementation of stricter protocols in public places.

BECOME AN ALLERGY ALLY AND BE **S A F E R**

Take action today and be someone those with allergies can rely on.

S SPOT THE SIGNS OF ANAPHYLAXIS

Learn to recognise the ABC of anaphylaxis symptoms.⁷

Airways: Swelling in the throat, tongue or upper airways.

Breathing: Sudden onset wheezing, breathing difficulty, noisy breath.

Circulation: Dizziness, feeling faint, sudden sleepiness, tiredness, confusion, pale clammy skin, loss of consciousness.

A ADMINISTER ADRENALINE WHEN NEEDED

Know how and when to use an adrenaline pen. Confidence in using an adrenaline pen can save a life. Quick action counts.

F FOSTER AWARENESS THROUGH SHARING RESOURCES AND KNOWLEDGE

62% of people believe that raising awareness is key to effective allergy management.

Talking openly about allergies at school, work or social events helps normalise the conversation. The more people who understand the risks, symptoms, and treatment, the safer we all become.

E ENCOURAGE ALLERGY-SAFE SPACES

Support allergy-friendly policies at home, school, work, restaurants, and events. This means advocating for:

- **Allergy action plans in schools**
- **Stricter allergy protocols in public places where allergens could be encountered**
- **More first-aid training across schools and workplaces, especially on recognising and responding to anaphylaxis**

R RALLY AS A SUPPORT NETWORK

For allergy sufferers, a close circle of family, friends, and healthcare professionals provides a vital safety net. Expanding that circle to include more allies means more people who are ready to help – quickly and confidently.

BECOME AN ALLERGY ALLY AND BE **S A F E R**

Together, we can create a more informed, more prepared, and more compassionate community. One that is truly **Ready2React**.

READY2REACT PARTNERS

Dr Glenis Scadding, Chair, is an Honorary Consultant Allergist and Rhinologist at the Royal National ENT Hospital, London. She is also an Honorary Associate Professor in the Department of Infection and Immunity at University College London, and is Vice President of EUFOREA.

Helen Blythe is the founder of the Benedict Blythe Foundation. Helen lost her son, Benedict, to anaphylaxis at school in 2021 when he was just 5 years old. The organisation lobbies, campaigns and provides guidance to make schools safer for pupils with allergies, including their ongoing campaign for Benedict's Law. Inspired by Benedict's passion for knowledge, exploration and play. The Foundation seeks to support other children to have the same positive relationship with learning regardless of their ability.

Prof Helen Brough is a Consultant in Paediatric Allergy and Immunology at the Children's Allergy Service at the Evelina Children's Hospital, London and a Professor of Paediatric Allergy at Kings College London. She is also the Medical Advisor for the Natasha Allergy Research Foundation and is on the Health Advisory Board for the UK charity, Allergy UK. Helen is the Director of Children's Allergy Doctors and runs private allergy clinics at the Portland Hospital for Women and Children's Health in London.

Mark Burdon is a Pharmacist with many years' experience within the NHS and private sector, in the UK and worldwide. He is Chair of the Board of Governors at the University of Sunderland.

Dr Andrew Bright is a Consultant Paediatrician at Gateshead Health and an Honorary Consultant in Paediatric Allergy at the Great North Children's Hospital in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He is also a member of the British Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology and sits on the National Allergy Strategy's Education Working Group. In addition he Co-Chairs the Northern Paediatric Allergy Group and leads the Beat Anaphylaxis Project, along with holding an Associate Clinical Lectureship at Newcastle University.

Tracey Dunn is the Education and AllergyWise® Manager at Anaphylaxis UK. She was a teacher for 30 years and a Primary Head Teacher for over 15 years. She has worked with local councils and school nursing teams to review allergy care and training in schools. Tracey is also a mum to two allergic teens, one with food allergies and the other with grass and pollen allergies, she brings these perspectives along with her allergy knowledge to enhance the support provided.

Dr Audrey Dunn Galvin is a Programme Director at University College Cork, specialising in paediatric psychology, allergic disease, early years and medical education. She is a member of several international Task Forces on the management of food and peanut allergy, including the development of guidelines by the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (EAACI), the World Allergy Organisation (WAO), and the Global Allergy and Asthma European Network (GA2LEN).

Tanya Ednan-Laperouse, OBE, along with her husband Nadim, is the founder and trustee of The Natasha Allergy Research Foundation, the UK's food allergy charity. Tanya's daughter, Natasha, died from anaphylaxis in 2016 when she was just 15 years old. The charity's mission is to bring about positive change for people with food allergies by focusing on medical research, laws and policies, education and awareness.

Dr Helen Evans-Howells is a GP who became interested in allergy following her own experiences of raising a child with milk and nut allergies. She undertook a Master's degree in Allergy at Southampton University and now runs a private allergy clinic supporting patients and families struggling with allergies. Helen also helps run the peanut immunotherapy clinic at Southampton Hospital and lectures in the UK and internationally.

Dr George Gkimpas is a Consultant Allergist at Royal Preston Hospital, Council member of the British Society of Allergy & Clinical Immunology (BSACI), and the Chair of the BSACI Global Online Allergy Symposium. He was for several years the Chair of the Greater Manchester Central Research Ethics Committee, of the Health Research Authority.

Natalie Hopkins is the founder and lead trainer at The Allergy Badge, an accredited training centre that provides medically approved and fully comprehensive 'Allergy awareness and adrenaline auto-injector training' courses. The courses are available to schools, nurseries, businesses and clubs, and are all delivered by parents of children with life-threatening food allergies.

Simone Miles, CEO is a passionate advocate at Allergy UK, dedicated to empowering individuals living with allergies. Through education, support, and awareness, she champions inclusive environments and better healthcare access. She works tirelessly to ensure everyone with allergies feels understood, supported, and confident in managing their condition.



Support materials: For more information, links to support groups and learning resources, visit: www.ready2react.co.uk



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