

Perioperative Allergy Network recommendations for deciding which patients to refer for investigation of suspected perioperative hypersensitivity reactions

There is variability in the referral patterns for investigation of suspected perioperative allergy, particularly in respect to the referral of minor or cutaneous reactions.

In line with the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology¹, the Perioperative Allergy Network states the following:

1. Any patient with a suspected hypersensitivity reaction of modified Ring and Messmer grade 1-4 should be referred for investigation, irrespective of the results of mast cell tryptase sampling
2. Patients with transient, self-limiting flushing should not be referred
3. Patients with only localised erythema (e.g. localised to the arm where a drug has been injected) should not be referred

With any referral please include: referral form, copy of anaesthetic chart, brief narrative of the event, current medications, medical history and a suitable non-identifiable photograph of any rash

TABLE 1 Classification of clinical severity of perioperative immediate hypersensitivity: modified Ring and Messmer four-step grading scale^{66,67}

Grade I Skin or mucosal signs only

- generalized erythema
- extensive urticaria
- with or without angio-oedema

Grade II Moderate signs from several organ systems

- skin or mucosal signs
- ± hypotension ± tachycardia
- ± bronchospasm
- ± gastrointestinal signs

Grade III Life-threatening signs from one or more organ systems

- cardiovascular collapse (life-threatening hypotension)
- tachycardia or bradycardia ± cardiac dysrhythmia
- ± bronchospasm
- ± skin or mucosal signs
- ± gastrointestinal signs

Grade IV circulatory and/or respiratory arrest

Table 1 taken directly from EAACI position paper¹

1 – Garvey LH, Ebo DG, Mertes PM, Dewachter P, Garcez T, Kopac P, Laguna JJ, Chiriac AM, Terreehorst I, Voltolini S, Scherer K. An EAACI position paper on the investigation of perioperative immediate hypersensitivity reactions. *Allergy*. 2019 Oct;74(10):1872-1884. doi: 10.1111/all.13820. Epub 2019 Jun 18. PMID: 30964555.