

Survey Finds Many Adults and Children at Risk of Anaphylaxis Unprepared in the Event of a Life-Threatening Emergency

LAVAL, QC, Nov. 1, 2012 /CNW/ - According to a new 2012 Leger Marketing survey commissioned by Sanofi Canada, an alarming number of Canadians at risk of anaphylaxis do NOT always carry or have immediate access to an epinephrine auto-injector. And many are uncertain about how to correctly use the device.

Low level of compliance

The national survey of adults and parents of children at risk of anaphylaxis found that 57% overall do NOT always carry an epinephrine auto-injector as recommended by physicians.

By group, a surprising 63% of adult patients and 51% of parents with children at risk do NOT have an auto-injector immediately available at all times.

Research shows that most deaths associated with anaphylaxis have resulted from not having epinephrine readily available or delaying its use.¹

"At risk individuals should have an epinephrine auto-injector immediately available at all times," explains Dr. Susan Wasserman, a Canadian allergist and researcher. "But this survey tells us there are serious gaps. These individuals need to be better prepared."

Although the precise number of people at risk of anaphylaxis is unknown, a recent publication found that approximately 7% (or about 2.5 million Canadians) self-report a food allergy.²

Uncertain about correct use

Another disturbing finding of the survey is that a significant number of people who have been prescribed an auto-injector are uncertain or lack confidence about how to use it.

- 27% feel they would likely panic in the event they or their child had an anaphylactic reaction
- 16% overall (19% of adults and 14% of parents) say they are not confident in their ability to correctly use the auto-injector

Laurie Harada, Executive Director of Anaphylaxis Canada and the mother of a teenager with food allergies, notes that "being prepared is critical. All patients and their caregivers should have immediate access to their auto-injector and know how to use it properly in case of a reaction."

Worried others will not know what to do

One of the biggest worries among patients and parents is the fear that if they or their children were unable to care for themselves and had to rely on others during an allergic reaction, these other individuals may not know how to administer the auto-injector.

- 56% overall (47% of adult patients and 64% of parents with children at risk) worry that others will not know how to use an auto-injector in an emergency
- More than 40% of patients and parents say people around them/their children are likely to panic in this situation

About Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a systemic allergic reaction that often involves respiratory symptoms and cardiovascular collapse, which are potentially life-threatening if not treated promptly.³

The most common foods that cause reactions are peanuts, tree nuts, sesame, soy, fish, wheat, eggs, milk and seafood. Foods account for most cases of anaphylaxis in children, while medications and stinging insects are more likely to cause a reaction in adults. Some individuals also experience severe allergic reactions to natural latex rubber.⁴

About the survey

The survey was completed on-line from August 27, 2012 to September 15, 2012. The total sample size was 1,089 individuals - composed of 565 Canadian adults at risk of anaphylaxis, and 524 Canadian parents of children at risk for anaphylaxis (366 mothers and 158 fathers).

A probability sample for adults at risk of anaphylaxis of the same size would yield a margin of error of $\pm 4.1\%$, 19 times out of 20. A probability sample of parents of children at risk for anaphylaxis of the same size would yield a margin of error of $\pm 4.3\%$, 19 times out of 20.

About Sanofi

Sanofi, a global and diversified healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi has core strengths in the field of healthcare with seven growth platforms: diabetes solutions, human vaccines, innovative drugs, consumer healthcare, emerging markets, animal health and the new Genzyme. Sanofi is listed in Paris (EURONEXT: SAN) and in New York (NYSE: SNY).

Sanofi companies in Canada include Sanofi Canada (pharmaceuticals), Sanofi Pasteur (vaccines), Sanofi Consumer Health (health and beauty), Genzyme (rare diseases) and Merial (animal health). Together they employ more than 1,700 people across the country. In 2011 Sanofi companies invested \$151.7 million in R&D in Canada, creating jobs, business and opportunity throughout the country.

A summary of the survey report is available at: <http://products.sanofi.ca/en/anaphylaxis-survey.pdf>

Regional findings are summarized below.

Available for interviews both regionally and nationally are: individuals at risk or who have children at risk of anaphylaxis, Allergists, representatives of Anaphylaxis Canada, and a spokesperson for Sanofi Canada.

Regional Findings

Low level of compliance

Do NOT always carry an epinephrine auto-injector as recommended by physicians:

- Canada: 57%
- Atlantic: 61%
- Quebec: 48%
- Ontario: 57%
- West: 63%

Likely to Panic

Likely to panic in the event they or their child had an anaphylactic reaction:

- Canada: 27%
- Atlantic: 23%
- Quebec: 28%
- Ontario: 23%
- West: 32%

Uncertain about correct use

Are not confident in their ability to correctly use an auto-injector:

- Canada: 16%
- Atlantic: 16%
- Quebec: 13%
- Ontario: 16%
- West: 19%

Worried others will not know what to do

Others may not know how to administer an auto-injector:

- Canada: 56%
- Atlantic: 56%
- Quebec: 47%
- Ontario: 57%
- West: 59%

¹ Bock et al, JACI 2001 Jan v107 p 191

² L. Soller et al, *Overall Prevalence of Self-reported Food Allergy in Canada*, Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (2012). doi: 10.1016/j.jaci.2012.06.029

³ Frew A.J. What are the 'ideal' features of an adrenaline (epinephrine) auto-injector in the treatment of anaphylaxis? Allergy 2010; DOI:10.1111/j.1398-9995.2010.02450.x.

⁴ Health Canada, *It's Your Health, Severe Allergic Reactions*.

SOURCE: SANOFI CANADA

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