

AQUAGENIC URTICARIA

Allergies to Water Can be Life-Threatening

Those Suffering from Symptoms of Aquagenic Urticaria May be Allergic to What is in the Water, Not Water Itself

Aquagenic urticaria known commonly as having a water allergy is an extremely rare condition. Those who suffer from the condition may find it difficult to navigate through everyday life.

Please use this guide as a resource for knowledge and understanding of aquagenic urticaria symptoms, diagnosis and treatment.

01 | Symptoms

Symptoms may be difficult to attribute to aquagenic urticaria, it is important to keep a record of symptoms in order to associate a pattern of symptoms when coming in contact with water. The following is a list of symptoms which can develop post water contact:

- Itchiness and skin rashes
- Burning sensation due to water contact
- Painful and discomforting skin feeling
- Hives and raised red bumps (wheals) on the skin surface
- Difficulty breathing
- Dry eyes
- Sore and red eyes
- Swelling of the throat after drinking water

02 | Diagnosis

Aquagenic urticaria is diagnosed by testing the skin's reaction to both tap and distilled water. However, research has shown that a response to contact with tap water is the most common types. The water could be placed directly on the skin or through a wet, saturated paper towel. Positive response will happen only after few minutes in contact. Occasionally the medical provider may order lab tests to ensure that another genetic or rheumatic disease is not the cause of the allergic reaction.

03 | Treatment

While treatment needs to be tailored to each patient, it is possible to alleviate symptoms and combat the allergen. The following are common treatment options which can help diminish the effects of the disease:

- **Oral antihistamine**- Antihistamines have frequently been used to reverse or minimize the symptoms by providing relief of symptoms such as itching or blistering.
- **Topical corticosteroids**- Parenteral corticosteroids have been used to help treat symptoms by providing relief of symptoms such as itching or blistering.
- **Epinephrine**- Patients with severe bouts of urticarial that appear to be acute will frequently use this medication to help decrease the appearance of skin reactions caused by stressed skin cells. This can also help inhibit mast cell degranulation which may contribute to the presence of aquagenic urticaria.
- **Ultraviolet radiation**- Radiation is commonly used alongside antihistamines to help rid the patient of lesions and outbreaks.
- **Stanazolol**- Treatments for the human immunodeficiency virus or HIV have been found to help with to alleviate symptoms. Medications such as Capsaicin are often used for producing Zostrix, a cream applied to lessen pain that caused by this condition.
- **Barrier methods**- In some circumstances emulsion cream can be applied to the skin to protect it from water exposure while washing or performing aquatic activities.

For more information on aquagenic urticaria and other allergies, please visit: <http://aafa.org>

*Did You Know?
1 in 230 million people are
allergic to water*

References

<http://www.md-health.com/Aquagenic-Urticaria.html>

<https://rarediseases.info.nih.gov/diseases/10901/aquagenic-urticaria>