

# Clinical features that may help differentiate between a **vasovagal episode** and **anaphylaxis**

Clinical feature	Vasovagal episode	Anaphylaxis
<b>Onset</b>	Immediate, usually within minutes of, or during, vaccine administration	Usually within 15 minutes of vaccine administration, but can occur within hours
<b>Respiratory symptoms or signs</b>	Normal breathing; may be shallow, but not laboured	Cough Wheeze Hoarseness Stridor Signs of respiratory distress, such as abnormally rapid breathing ( <i>tachypnoea</i> ), cyanosis or rib recession Upper airway swelling (eg <i>lip, tongue, throat, uvula, larynx</i> )
<b>Cardiovascular symptoms or signs</b>	Bradycardia Weak/absent peripheral pulse Strong carotid pulse Hypotension – usually transient and corrects in supine position Loss of consciousness – improves once supine or in head-down position	Tachycardia Weak/absent carotid pulse Hypotension – sustained and no improvement without specific treatment ( <b>Note:</b> <i>In infants and young children, limpness and pallor are signs of hypotension</i> ) Loss of consciousness – no improvement once supine or in head-down position
<b>Skin symptoms or signs</b>	Generalised pallor Cool, clammy skin	Pruritus ( <i>skin itchiness</i> ) Generalised skin erythema ( <i>redness</i> ) Urticaria ( <i>weals</i> ) Angioedema ( <i>localised or general swelling of the deeper layers of the skin or subcutaneous tissues</i> )
<b>Gastrointestinal symptoms or signs</b>	Nausea or vomiting	Abdominal cramps Diarrhoea Nausea or vomiting
<b>Neurologic symptoms or signs</b>	Person feels faint or light-headed	Person has a sense of severe anxiety and distress