



Anaphylactic Reactions on the Beach: A Cause for Concern?

To the Editor-in-Chief:

Karatzanis et al.¹ propose the storage of epinephrine in restaurants, bars, and beaches, and its administration by trained lifeguards in Crete, Greece. Epinephrine is life saving in the management of anaphylaxis,² and we would not want to delay its administration; however, the following should be considered:

1. Many conditions can mimic anaphylaxis, and may occur on the beach. Making the correct diagnosis is essential as epinephrine, even intramuscular, given outside the context of life-threatening anaphylaxis is not appropriate and not without risk.²
2. Even among medical doctors, confusion arises regarding the dose and route of administration of epinephrine for anaphylaxis.³
3. The auto-injector has a shelf-life of approximately 20 months, and should be stored at a temperature of 25°C, not be refrigerated and must be protected from light.⁴ The cost effectiveness of storing epinephrine at these locations could be debated.

In our opinion, from the UK perspective, training lifeguards on a 2-month course to correctly recognize life-threatening anaphylaxis, administer the epinephrine, and be able to manage complications associated with its use is not appropriate. Immediate attention from trained medical/paramedical personnel with appropriate equipment and monitoring should be sought. Lifeguards could be trained to assist patients who carry an auto-injector, who have been trained in its use, and have a documented history of anaphylactic reactions.

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