

# Angioedema

ALLERGOLOGY

## Patient information

- **The symptoms:** swelling in the face (lips, eyelids), tongue, and throat. Sometimes also of the hands, feet, and/or genitals. This usually lasts several days.
- **The cause:** often unclear. Sometimes a side effect of a drug (Such as ACE inhibitors, NSAID's). Rarely, there is a hereditary disease.
- **Treatment:** stop using the drug of which swelling is a side effect. In case of an unknown cause, antihistamine tablets.

### What is angioedema?

Angioedema involves sudden swelling in the face (lips, eyelids), of the tongue, and sometimes in the throat, of the hands and feet, and/or genitals. Sometimes, angioedema may be accompanied by shortness of breath, vomiting, abdominal pain, and/or diarrhoea. In addition, hives (urticaria) can occur. The symptoms typically occur within minutes to hours and can persist for several days. Usually, there is an asymmetric distribution of the swelling (for example, a part of the tongue and half of a lip).

### What causes angioedema?

Often, the cause of an angioedema is unclear. Sometimes, it occurs as a side effect of a drug. In particular, ACE inhibitors (blood pressure-lowering medications, such as enalapril) and NSAIDs (painkillers, such as ibuprofen) are notorious. Other, rare forms of angioedema include a hereditary form that often occurs as early as puberty (hereditary angioedema) or develops at an older age (acquired angioedema).

### How is the diagnosis made?

Angioedema is often easy to recognize due to typical abnormalities in the face. Pictures taken during an attack can facilitate the diagnosis. Blood tests may be useful if the allergist suspects hereditary or acquired angioedema.

### How do you treat angioedema?

If a particular drug causes angioedema, discontinuing the usage of this drug permanently usually alleviates the symptoms. When the cause is unknown, the treatment involves antihistamine tablets. These tablets typically help control the symptoms, phased out over time. There is a specific treatment for hereditary angioedema.

### Insurance coverage

DC Klinieken has contracts with all health insurers. This means that almost all healthcare costs are covered, similar to the hospital. However, you will need a referral from your general practitioner. Please be aware of your insurance excess. For more information about reimbursement and possible exceptions, please visit: [www.dcklinieken.nl/vergoedingen](http://www.dcklinieken.nl/vergoedingen).

### Questions

For more information and answers to frequently asked questions, please visit: [www.dcklinieken.nl/contact](http://www.dcklinieken.nl/contact) or contact our Service and Information Centre at +31 (0) 88 0100 900.

### Emergency after visiting DC Klinieken

In case of emergency, call: +31 (0) 88 0100 998.

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