Abstract:
Anaphylaxis, the maximal manifestation of an immediate allergic reaction, is a life-threatening systemic reaction. The immediate therapy is chosen according to the clinical manifestations and new German guidelines are in preparation. Required measures include immediate removal of allergen, adequate positioning, assessment of severity and organ involvement and activation of emergency medical services. In anaphylaxis with primarily cardiovascular involvement, epinephrine is the treatment of choice and given together with volume substitution, oxygen, H(1)-antihistamines and corticosteroids. Obstruction of the airways is treated with intramuscular and inhaled epinephrine, or alternatively ?(2)-sympathicomimetics, and oxygen. Abdominal or cutaneous involvement, such as generalized urticaria, usually can be treated with intravenous H(1)-antihistamines, glucocorticoids and surveillance. In patients with anaphylaxis, the elicitor of the reaction has to be diagnosed by allergy testing. Patients with sustained risk for anaphylaxis should receive a self-medication kit and should be educated about behavioral patterns needed for prophylaxis and therapy of anaphylactic reactions. Patient educational intervention increases knowledge about anaphylaxis, and practical competence and thus, is a basis of a successful management of anaphylaxis.