



**El Dorado County Emergency Medical  
Services Agency**  
Quick Reference

Revised Date: July 27, 2023

**Medication Profile**

**DIPHENHYDRAMINE**

(Benadryl)

**Class:**

Antihistamine

**Action:**

Competes with histamine at receptor sites.

Reverses muscle spasms associated with dystonic reactions (phenothiazine).

**Onset:** IV/IO: 1-5min IM/PO: 15 minutes

**Duration:** 3-4 hours

**Adult Administration:**

- **Allergic Reaction/Anaphylaxis:** 50mg IV/IO/IM or PO.
- **Dystonic Reaction:** 50mg IV/IO/IM (*IV/IO preferred*)

**Pediatric Administration:**

1mg/kg slow IV/IO/IM or PO (Max 25mg)

**Indications:**

- Allergic Reaction
- Muscle spasms associated with dystonic reaction.

**Contraindications:**

- Acute asthma
- Glaucoma
- COPD

**Side Effects:**

- Hypotension
- Drowsiness
- Tachycardia
- Bradycardia
- Dry Mouth

**Pregnancy:**

Category B

**Notes:**

- May cause depressed level of consciousness in elderly patients.
- Overdose may result in seizures, coma, and death.