

Information For New Patients Starting Immunotherapy

1. From your skin test results, we have prepared allergen sets. They have been diluted to a very weak concentration. Each time you come in we will increase your dose, thereby increasing your tolerance to those things you are allergic to. Therefore, it is important for you to come in on a regular schedule. For the first 2-3 months, you will need to come in twice a week. Then the injection frequency will decrease to once a week, every 2 weeks, every 3 weeks, and eventually every 4 wks.
2. Studies have shown that allergen injection therapy, if administered properly, is successful in relieving symptoms in the majority of patients with allergic rhinitis and allergic asthma. The rate and degree of improvement vary with individual patients. For these reasons, you will require visits with the doctor **every 3 months** to monitor your progress. We will inform you when to schedule these visits.
3. Local reactions are the reactions occurring in the injection site. **Systemic reactions** refer to any symptoms (**shortness of breath, generalized itchiness, feeling dizzy** etc) occurring away from the site of injection. Systemic reactions are rare, but if they occur, they would do so during the first 20 –30 minutes. Therefore, it is mandatory **to wait 20 minutes** in the office so that we can treat you. To minimize the risk of reactions, **you are requested to take an antihistamine such as Allegra or Claritin 1 – 2 hours before your appointment.** Please show the nurse your arms before leaving the office so that we can record the extent of your local reaction.
4. If you have a systemic reaction outside of our practice, please contact our office immediately by phone. If you are in the vicinity, return promptly to our office. In the event that you cannot reach our office, report to the nearest emergency room.
5. When starting your injections, your first shot may be a skin test (intradermal) to make sure the concentration is not too strong. The doctor must be in the office during your first injection.
6. Check your injection sites **4 hours later.** If there is an area of redness, swelling or both 1 inch diameter or larger, it is important for you to report it to us on your next visit.
7. No shots can be given if you are running a fever of over 99 degrees, are having an increased asthma symptoms, or you are having an acute allergic episode.
8. Check with us to see if your **current medicines** are safe during immunotherapy. If you are pregnant or planning pregnancy, please let us know.
9. It is important that you do not engage in any strenuous physical activity for 90 minutes after injections.

DATE: _____ Patient's signature: _____ Witness: _____