



UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL ALLERGIES

ENVIRONMENTAL & FOOD ALLERGIES

Allergies are extremely common and millions of Americans suffer from seasonal and perennial (environmental) allergies. An allergic reaction occurs when a person's immune system reacts to a normally harmless substance. The source of this substance, called an allergen, may be from different types of food, pollen, mold, dust mites, or pet dander.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE ALLERGY TESTING / TREATMENT APPOINTMENT

The allergy team at Coastal ENT, LLC utilizes the gold standard of testing; Modified Quantitative Testing (MQT). It is a two part skin test that first applies concentrated allergens to the outermost layers of the skin with a multiple skin prick testing device. Once the skin prick test results are obtained we will then move on to Intradermal Dilution Testing (IDT). This second part of the testing requires a small amount of diluted allergens be placed just under the skin. All testing is completed in one appointment and is virtually painless.

Please come to the appointment dressed comfortably, preferably with a short sleeved shirt as the testing is usually performed on both of the arms. Do not put any lotions, creams or perfumes on your skin the day of testing. We request that you do not bring small children with you when you are scheduled for skin testing unless they are accompanied by another adult who can sit with them in the reception room.

You should not undergo skin allergy testing if:

- You are pregnant.
- You have a skin condition called *dermatographism*.
- You have unstable asthma, your asthma is worsening or you have been hospitalized for asthma in the past year.
- You are taking a **beta blocker*** for high blood pressure.

HOW TO TREAT ALLERGIES

Avoidance: Environmental allergens are impossible to avoid, but reducing exposure in conjunction with other therapies may contribute to symptom relief.

Pharmacotherapy: Medications that can control allergy symptoms but after stopping the medication your symptoms will come right back. Some common products include: antihistamines, decongestants, leukotriene inhibitors and prescription nasal sprays



Immunotherapy: The only proven *therapy* that reworks the immune system to recognize the allergens and not want to react to them. We offer two types of immunotherapy:

Allergy Injections: Require weekly subcutaneous injections that eventually will be weaned after maintenance therapy has been achieved and symptom relief is evident.

Sublingual immunotherapy: The same specific serum is created, but the delivery is different. NO injections! This therapy utilizes dosing by administering the allergy serum under your tongue with daily drops. There are no injections, no weekly visits to the allergy office.

MEDICATIONS TO AVOID BEFORE YOUR UPCOMING ALLERGY TEST

Antihistamines and other medications may affect the results of skin allergy testing. Some of these medications and instructions are outlined below. In addition, many over the counter cold and cough medications, sleep-aids, and acid reducers/ heartburn medications that act as antihistamines and may need to be stopped before skin testing. If you are unsure, contact us with any questions.

Antihistamines, H1 inhibitors		Hold one week prior to testing	
Chlorpheniramine	Dexchlorpheniramine	Desloratidine (Clarinex)	Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)
Cetirizine (Zyrtec)	Loratidine (Claritin)	Astemizole (Hismanal) - withhold 6 wks	Fexofenadine (Allegra)
Tricyclic antidepressants		Hold one week prior to testing	
Adapine (Doxepin)	Anaframil (Clomipramine)	Aventyl Hydrochloride (Nortryptiline)	Asendin (Amoxampine)
Elavil (Amitriptyline)	Endep (Amitriptyline)	Etrafon (Amitriptyline)	Limbitrol (Amitriptyline)
Anti-anxiety medications		Hold one week prior to testing	
Alprazolam (Xanax)	Clonazepam (Klonopin)		



Antihistamines H2 inhibitors		Hold for one day prior to testing	
Cimetidine (Tagamet)	Famotidine (Pepcid)	Nizatidine (Axid)	Ranitidine (Zantac)
Herbal Supplements		Hold one week prior to testing	
Licorice	Green Tea	Saw Palmetto	St. John's Wort
Feverfew	Milk Thistle	Astralagus	

DO NOT DISCONTINUE ANY PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS WITH OUT CONSULTING WITH THE PRESCRIBING PHYSICIAN

Medications you **DO NOT NEED TO DISCONTINUE:**

- Singulair
- Inhaled corticosteroids: Advair, Symbicort, Qvar
- Albuterol, asthma medications
- Nasal Sprays
- Pseudoephedrine: Sudafed
- Phenylephrine
- N-SAIDS (Advil, Motrin, Aspirin, etc.), Tylenol

* **Beta blockers** are a type of blood pressure medication. They are also commonly found in eye drops. If you are on beta blockers skin allergy testing and allergy immunotherapy may not be safe for you. If there is an adverse response to allergy testing/treatment, it may be more difficult to treat if you are on beta blockers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Allergy Department at

(732) 280-7855 ext. 138