

UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL ALLERGIES THAT CAUSE RHINITIS

ENVIRONMENTAL ALLERGIES

Allergies are extremely common and millions of Americans suffer from seasonal or perennial (year round) 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 pollen, mold, dust mites, or pet dander among others.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE ALLERGY TESTING / TREATMENT APPOINTMENT

The allergy program 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 epidermis or outermost layer of the skin utilizing a skin prick testing device. This first part of the test will give a general sense of what allergens you are sensitive to and to what degree of sensitivity. 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. The results of the testing are combined and our end points allow us to formulate your immunotherapy based on your specific testing results.

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.

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.

TREATMENT OPTIONS AND CHOICES

Avoidance: Try your best to avoid or minimize contact with your problematic allergens.

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 TESTING

Some of the medications that you may be taking may result in inaccurate skin allergy test results. Medications listed in this hand out should be stopped prior to allergy testing. **Please consult with your treating physician before stopping your medications.** If you are unable to stop medications listed here, you should inform our staff and we will schedule you for blood allergy testing.

Antihistamines, H1 inhibitors¹		Hold one week prior to testing	
Chlorpheniramine	Dexchlorpheniramine	Desloratidine (Clarinet)	Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)
Cetirizine (Zyrtec)	Loratidine (Claritin)	Astemizole (Hismanal) – withhold 6 wks	Fexofenadine (Allegra)
Tricyclic antidepressants²		Hold one week prior to testing	
Adapine (Doxepin)	Anafranil (Clomipramine)	Aventyl Hydrochloride (Nortriptyline)	Asendin (Amoxapine)
Elavil (Amitriptyline)	Endep (Amitriptyline)	Etrafon (Amitriptyline)	Limbitrol (Amitriptyline)
Anti-anxiety medications²		Hold one week prior to testing	
Alprazolam (Xanax)	Clonazepam (Klonopin)		

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Allergy Department at (732) 280-7855 ext. 107.