



Allergy Shots:

ALLERGY IMMUNOTHERAPY VIA SUBCUTANEOUS IMMUNOTHERAPY

Allergy Injections Guide and FAQ

*Thank you for using Cure Allergy Clinic
for your allergy injections.*

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Immunotherapy generally requires 3-5 years of treatment for disease-modifying results, and results are not guaranteed. Immunotherapy may cause life-threatening reactions, and must always be done under the supervision of a licensed practitioner. Results may not be apparent for 12-24 months, and results are not guaranteed.

Allergy shots, also called subcutaneous immunotherapy, involve injecting small amounts of antigen (allergy-causing protein) slightly under the skin. Each subsequent injection increases in strength (more protein) until the immune system retrains itself to lessen the allergy. We expect symptoms to mildly start to improve in 3 months, with more significant improvement expected in 6-8 months. Improvements are progressive; you will still have good and bad days depending on your exposure to the outside allergic world, but we expect those bad days to become less and less frequent as time goes on.

Larry gets 2 sinus infections every year

Every fall and winter. He has a runny nose year-round, and he can't be around dogs. He uses a daily Allegra and sometimes needs a Benadryl to help him sleep because of the itching.

He feels low energy during heavy pollen seasons. Larry gets tested and is found to have allergies to molds, ragweed, dog dander, and dust mites. Larry decides to get allergy shots to lessen his symptoms.

Larry will get 2 injections on each visit, one for the Ragweed and Dog dander proteins, and one for the mold and dust mite proteins.



How do I get my shots?

Allergy shots involve two dosing schedules, a build-up phase (where the dose increases each time), and a maintenance phase (where the dose stays the same and the duration between shots can start to increase). The build-up phase is roughly 25-30 injections. At first, you want to get a minimum of one shot once a week. If you wish to speed up the process to get to maintenance dosing more quickly, you may get shots more than once a week provided they are 48 hours apart. You may also sign up for a Cluster, a 2-hour session where you receive several shots in one sitting rather than in 4-5 weeks.



Mike wants to build up slowly.

He gets his shots every Wednesday. After 30 injections, he reached his maintenance dose and feels much better. Now he gets an injection every 2 weeks, every other Wednesday. He missed a week here and there, and his dosing was adjusted.



Jennifer wants to build up faster.

She knows grass season is approaching and she wants to be prepared. She gets an injection every Monday and every Friday. Unlike Mike, she reached her maintenance dose in 15 weeks instead of 30. She started to feel better in 2 months instead of 3, and now, like Mike, she gets an injection every 2 weeks.



Payel wants to build up much faster.

She wishes to do Cluster protocols, in which she comes to the office and gets several injections over a 2-hour period. She understands the 2-hour session will help her achieve what would normally take 4-5 weeks. She comes in for a Cluster once a week for 4 weeks, and then continues at once-a-week injections. After 2 months, Payel is at maintenance is feeling much better. She can now come in every two weeks.

** Exercise must be avoided on Cluster days. Clusters must be scheduled in advance. Please check with your insurance carrier if they cover Clusters.*

Shot Procedure

After an injection, you must remain near the office for 25 to 30 minutes. This is so you can be seen in case of any allergic reactions. Millions of allergy shots are given in the United States on a yearly basis, and they are usually safe. However, every now and then, a reaction can occur. Therefore,



we must take this precaution. Normal injections do not have to be scheduled: Just come into the office during our normal hours, but at least 20 minutes before closing.

For your safety, avoid a shot on days when you are feeling sick. It's best to avoid an injection on a day where your asthma isn't controlled, if you have a fever, or if you feel unwell. Individuals are more likely to have an allergic reaction when their immune system is already dealing with other things.

We may prescribe you an EpiPen as an added precaution to avoid allergic reactions.

We also recommend not exercising an hour before the injection, and avoid exercise 2 hours after the injection.

Blood pressure medications:

You must inform us if you are on blood pressure medication or if you have any changes to your medication. Two types of blood pressure medication – Beta-blockers and ACE-inhibitors – may change our direction while administering allergy injections. Beta-blockers are medications that usually end in -olol. ACE-inhibitors end in -pril. You must also inform us of uncontrolled wheeziness or shortness of breath before getting an injection.

Can I stop my asthma medications?

You may not stop your asthma inhalers while on allergy injections. You must continue to use them. This is because it will lessen the risk of reaction. Over time, if your asthma is better controlled, we may start to decrease the dose. You may start to decrease your antihistamines and nasal sprays as you find the injections starting to work over the course of 6 to 9 months. You may still need to restart an antihistamine every now and then when the pollen days are bad during the first year of treatment.

Paul has recurrent sinus infections, congestion, cough, and shortness of breath when he runs outdoors.



Before starting the allergy shots treatment, he was using Zyrtec, Flonase, Zaditor eye drops, and Advair daily. He also was using his Albuterol inhaler before outdoor exercise. After 6 months of starting allergy injections, Paul was able to stop the Flonase, Zaditor eye drops, and daily Zyrtec. On really windy days, he may require a Zyrtec every now and then. He now gets the injections every 2 weeks. After 9 months, he was able to stop the Albuterol before running. He no longer gets sinus infections. He is sleeping better and feels that he has more energy. After a year, Paul was able to get off of all his medications. He still gets his injection every 2 weeks. In his second year, Paul's injections were every 3 weeks. After his third year, we started to wean off the injection and then stopped it completely. Paul feels great and requires an occasional Zyrtec if the weather outside changes too rapidly.

How often will you remake my vials?

In the first year, we need to make build-up vials as well as maintenance vials. Every year after, we only need to make maintenance vials. They expire within 1 year of making them, so we will need to make the next set 10-12 months after the first set.

What is in these vials?

Purified sterile natural protein from a certified medical distributor, water, saline (salt), bacteriostatic agent (to prevent bacteria growth), albumin (a natural protein found in several foods and animals/humans). These vials expire just like any natural protein products you may eat and must be kept cold.

Besides my allergy medications, should I take any supplements?

We recommend taking a daily dose of Vitamin D – 2,000 units once a day – while undergoing Immunotherapy. We also recommend a daily probiotic of your choice. Our preferred brands are Thorne Research and Klaire Probiotics. Both are available online.

What if I need to travel and miss my injections for 1 to 2 weeks?

This isn't a problem; we will adjust the dosing to "repay" the missed injection to your immune system.

What if I cannot tolerate the injections?

Rarely, some individuals develop such frequent asthma flares that we have to halt the injections for a period of time. Likewise, some individuals develop local itching or rashes at the injection site that prevent us from comfortably continuing. If this occurs, we offer a discount to transition a person to allergy drops. We also may need to adjust medication or dosing strategies so we may continue the injections.

How often should I have a doctor's visit?

During the build-up phase, we recommend a visit every 3-4 months until maintenance is reached. We then follow up every 6 months to start removing medications and to ensure symptoms are improving.

Can I inject myself at home?

No. To prevent the risk of an allergic reaction, the parameters set forth by the American Academy and the American College of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology and insurance companies ask that injections be done at a medical facility.

Are these injections lifelong?

No. We reassess your allergies at different intervals. We stop the injections once we believe your allergies have gone into remission (been cured). This usually takes 3 to 5 years of injections depending on the individual's age, the number of allergies, and symptoms. We expect relief in 3 to 6 months, but for the relief to be lifelong, it requires continuous exposure to the proteins via the injections. If you stop early, allergy symptoms may return in a few years. Back to Larry – after 2 years of treatment, he no longer gets frequent sinus infections and was even able to adopt a dog.