

Allergy Injections



(No appointment needed)

North Grove Office

Monday

11:00 am to 4:30 pm

Tuesday

8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Thursday

11:00 am to 4:30 pm

Greer Office

Wednesday

12:00 pm to 4:30 pm

Spartanburg Ear, Nose & Throat

North Grove Medical Park

1330 Boiling Springs Road, Suite 1400

Spartanburg, South Carolina 29303

Telephone (864) 278-1274

Fax (864) 582-4991

Greer Ear, Nose, & Throat

Pelham Medical Center Medical Offices

2755 S. Highway 14, Suite 2400

Greer, South Carolina 29650

Website: www.spartanburgent.com

Email: allergy@spartanburgent.com



Like us on Facebook



INSTRUCTIONS FOR BEGINNING IMMUNOTHERAPY



Otolaryngology

John A. Foster, M.D.

Christopher D. Rucker, M.D.

H. Frederick Butehorn, III, M.D.

Richard M. Weir, M.D.

Erik D. Steiniger, M.D.

What is Immunotherapy?

The purpose of immunotherapy, or allergy injections, (also commonly referred to as “allergy shots”) is to decrease your sensitivity to allergy-causing substances. These substances are called allergens. Skin testing results help us to identify allergens that trigger your allergy symptoms. After treatment with immunotherapy, exposure to the offending allergen (pollen, mold, mites, etc.) will result in fewer and less severe symptoms.

Allergy injections have been shown to dampen the allergic response and decrease allergic antibody levels. These changes may permit you to tolerate exposure to the allergen with fewer symptoms.

In effect, you can become tolerant to the allergen. This process is different for each person, based on skin test results and clinical symptoms.

What to Expect

Injections are given weekly. The dosage will begin with a very small amount and will gradually increase with each injection until a maintenance dose is reached. After reaching maintenance and your symptoms are controlled, your doctor may decrease your frequency of injections.

Improvement in symptoms will not be immediate. It may take three to six months of weekly injections before any relief of symptoms is noted. Full benefits may be evident in 12-24 months. Therapy needs to continue for approximately three to five years to get long term benefit.



Possible Side Effects

Injections are usually given in the subcutaneous tissue on the back of the upper arm. The injections are safe, but as with allergy testing, there is a risk of a reaction.

Reactions may occur anytime during your allergy shot therapy. Reactions may occur while you are in the office or up to 36 hours after the injection. Most common are local reactions at the injection(s) site. The reaction can involve the whole upper arm with redness, swelling, pain, itching, and burning. Generalized reactions (systemic or anaphylactic) can range from mild to severe and are normally seen 15-20 minutes after the injection.

Related symptoms might be itching, hives, shortness of breath, cough, chest tightness, a drop in blood pressure, or even a loss of consciousness.

Due to the risk of reaction, patients will be required to remain in the clinic area for twenty (or more) minutes following each injection.

Information the Nurse Will Need

In order to minimize the risk for reactions, the nurse needs to know the following information:

- Inform the nurse of any reactions regarding the last injection.
- Prior to receiving each injection, please inform the nurse of any illness or fever. A risk of reaction is much higher when you are ill. In this situation, the dose may need to be held or adjusted.
- Also, please inform the nurse of any new medications that you are taking.
- If you are taking beta blockers, please let us know. (Beta blockers are contraindicated while on immunotherapy. Your injections may need to be discontinued.)
- Notify the nurse if you become pregnant while on immunotherapy. Immunotherapy dosages will not be advanced or may even be discontinued during pregnancy.
- Patients should also avoid strenuous exercise one to two hours prior to and after injections, as this increases your risk for a reaction.