



You have received a series of intradermal skin tests and will soon receive an injection or multiple injections for treatment. You may develop reactions following either the test or treatment. These reactions are rare and can be easily treated. The local reactions you may experience on your arm can be itching, swelling, redness or warmth to the touch. If this occurs, you can use Benadryl ointment, spray or take a 25mg Benadryl tablet every 4-6 hours. You can also apply ice to the area. Please call us if the symptoms persist. **Generalized reactions may be chest tightness, shortness of breath or wheezing. If you have any of these symptoms, please call our office immediately.** If you should feel ill or have a fever on the day you are scheduled for an injection, please call and discuss with our office.

### **POSSIBLE REACTIONS TO ALLERGY INJECTIONS**

#### **LOCAL REACTIONS:**

Red, itchy swelling at the site of the injection is not uncommon. It may start immediately after the injection or up to several hours later. Ice, calamine lotion or Benadryl cream will usually bring the swelling down.

If the swelling bothers you during your wait in our office, please show it to the doctor, nurse or allergy tech. If it starts after you leave, write down the position (if you received more than one injection), its size and how long it lasted. Tell this to the allergy tech at your next visit. *This is very important because your next dose will be adjusted depending on the amount of swelling that you report.*

#### **SYSTEMIC REACTIONS:**

Allergy symptoms such as rashes (not at the injection site), sneezing, nasal stuffiness, cough or tight chest that may occur after an allergy injection are called systemic reactions. Report them to your doctor or nurse in the office as soon as they occur so you can be given something for the symptoms. If the reactions start shortly after leaving the office, it is best to return immediately, otherwise use your own allergy medication and the symptoms should disappear over the next 24 hours. Then report the symptoms to the allergy tech upon your next visit and the dosage will be adjusted. *Be aware that reactions may start within six hours after an injection(s).*

### **\*\*WARNING – BETA BLOCKER MEDICATIONS\*\***

IF YOU ARE TAKING BETA BLOCKER MEDICATION IN ANY FORM YOU CANNOT BE TESTED FOR ALLERGIES NOR CAN YOU RECEIVE TREATMENT FOR THEM. Beta Blockers can cause systemic reactions to allergy injections.

Beta Blocker medications include: Propranolol (Inderal), Metoprolol (Lopressor), Nadol (Cargard), Timolol, Timolide and Timoptic Eye Drops. These medications are often used for heart disorders, hypertension, migraine headaches and glaucoma. If the medication can be changed to a non-Beta Blocker class (only under supervision of the prescribing doctor), we may proceed with allergy testing and injections.



## UNDERSTANDING YOUR ALLERGIES

You have had intradermal skin testing or a RAST blood test and have shown a positive reaction to allergens. Not only has it been determined which of the airborne factors are causative in your problem, but your specific degree of sensitivity has been diagnosed. Your treatment will begin with injections once a week. This regiment may change based on your individual needs.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- ❖ **Now that I have finished testing, what happens?**  
A customized, individual serum will be prepared for you (if you decide to start immunotherapy).
- ❖ **When will the serum be ready for me?**  
Your serum will be ready in approximately one week after your testing.
- ❖ **How often will I be taking the injections?**  
A schedule will be prepared for your individual need. This schedule will be based upon your reaction to the serum. If you follow your suggested schedule closely, you will find that your shots will give you more relief.
- ❖ **What is the schedule for allergy injections?**  
This varies between individuals. They can be taken as frequently as every week and up to once a month. However, the schedule will be determined upon each person's need.
- ❖ **When do I see the Doctor again?**  
The doctor routinely sees her patients following testing. The doctor will go over your results and answer any questions you may have. After finishing each vial (approximately three months), there will be another appointment with the doctor as well.
- ❖ **What if there is no relief from the injections or they produce more symptoms?**  
Your body's chemistry is constantly changing and some people require an appropriate adjustment of their neutralizing dose from time to time. After your neutralizing dose is established and you are placed on maintenance treatment, changes are less frequent and additional testing will be performed as needed.
- ❖ **What is the neutralizing dose?**  
A neutralizing dose is the amount of serum to counteract your allergy symptoms.
- ❖ **What symptoms can be caused by the allergy serum?**  
You may experience the same kind of symptoms that brought you to our office such as stuffy nose, sneezing, running/itchy nose and swollen/teary eyes. You may experience some swelling and redness of the arms at the injection site as well.
- ❖ **Will the allergy serum interfere with other medications that I am taking?**  
No, but if you have any questions please contact us or your family doctor.

❖ **How long am I supposed to continue taking the allergy shots?**

It is impossible to determine how long an individual will have to keep taking the injections. Each person's progress must be evaluated on an individual basis. However, the minimal amount of time is usually two years.

❖ **What should I do if I develop an illness that is not directly related to my allergies?**

This office will take care of any allergy related difficulties along with ears, nose and throat problems. You need a family physician to take care of infections and other illnesses that are not allergy related. For this reason, always maintain contact with your family doctor and child's pediatrician.

❖ **Can I take my serum out of the office?**

For those who must take their allergy serum to another facility the following instructions apply:

(A) Please check with your family doctor or pediatrician to make sure they are able to give you your injection(s). You will need to have a Physician Release form signed by your doctor before we release the vials. This form can be obtained from our website or your allergy tech.

(B) The first injection(s) of serum from a new vial MUST be given in our office before you can take it elsewhere.

❖ **Does the allergy serum have to be refrigerated?**

Yes. If the serum is not refrigerated it will lose its effectiveness to supply relief. However, it can be taken out 30 minutes before your injection to eliminate any discomfort. *\*Never allow your serum to freeze. If this occurs we must remake the serum.\**

❖ **What is the lifespan of a bottle of allergy serum?**

Three to six months depending on how far along you are in treatment.

❖ **What happens if I run out of serum?**

For those who take their serum to another office, we ask that you contact our office when you are down to a one-week supply so that new serum can be made. You must receive your first injections from your new serum at our office.