

## ALLERGY IMMUNOTHERAPY OVERVIEW

Your treating physician may recommend you receive allergy treatment (immunotherapy). This information sheet will help you to understand the types of immunotherapy available. With this in mind, you will be able to decide which therapy will be best suited for you.

Remember that allergy immunotherapy is not a quick fix. It requires a commitment from you, and no matter which therapy you choose, the minimum length of time you will be under treatment will be three to five years.

*There are different forms of allergy immunotherapy. Your treating physician will discuss with you the option(s) that will be best suited for you.*

**The first therapy option is allergy shots.** In our practice, injections are given in our *Woodbury, Voorhees, Haddonfield, Willingboro, Washington Township and Mount Laurel offices*. Allergy injections are given once a week for approximately 30 weeks. This may be longer for some patients depending on reactions that may occur and compliance. The interval between injections will eventually be lengthened to every four weeks. **It is recommended for shot patients to carry an Epinephrine Auto-Injector on the day of their injections.**

You will need to make an appointment for your allergy injections. We will try to accommodate you at a convenient appointment time. **You will be REQUIRED to wait in the office for 30 minutes after your injection so that you may be checked for any evidence of reaction to the injection. This is done for your safety and is strictly enforced.**

*PLEASE NOTE: Once you have agreed to treatment and signed this form, allergy serum will be mixed that is specific to you and cannot be used for anyone else. For this reason, should you decide not to pursue injection therapy after this serum has been mixed and billed to your insurance, you will still be responsible for any balance that remains after payment from your insurance. In most cases, serum mixed is billed every 90 days through the course of your treatment.*

You may want to check with your insurance company regarding coverage of allergy injections. Some insurance companies require you to submit a co-pay with every injection, and some do not. Some patients receive one injection, but most of our patients receive two or three injections each visit. The insurance (CPT) codes for allergy injections are **95115** (one injection) and **95117** (two injections). The CPT code for the serum is **95165**. If you are considering choosing allergy injections as your therapy, you should call your insurance company to check on your financial responsibility for allergy injections using the codes above. You will be receiving the injection only and not an office visit unless you see the doctor on the same day as your injection.

**The second therapy option is sublingual immunotherapy (allergy drops).** In this therapy, a serum is prepared in much the same way as the serum that is used for injections. The difference is that it is administered under the tongue rather than injected. Your first dose is given in the office, at which time you will be instructed on how to use the drops on a once-a-day dosing schedule. Your allergy drops will last six months, at which time new bottles will need to be ordered. You will receive a reminder via email, phone or text when it is time to reorder a new set of vials for six more months. At that time (or soon thereafter), you should call the Allergy Department to order your vials and to ask any questions you may have.

**It is REQUIRED for all patients on sublingual immunotherapy to have an Epinephrine Auto-Injector.**

There is no insurance (CPT) code for allergy drops, and no insurance companies cover this treatment. Please speak with our Allergy Department for current pricing. This must be paid before the drops are prepared. You will be provided a receipt for this charge should it be needed for Flexible Health Spending Accounts (Personal Wellness Accounts) or tax purposes (if applicable). Once the serum is mixed, no refunds may be given.

Studies done for both therapies have shown that over three years, the effectiveness of each therapy was very similar.

When you begin allergy immunotherapy (IT), you do not have to discontinue your allergy medications. In time, as the IT starts to take effect, you will be able to take less medication, and you may gradually be weaned from your current allergy prescriptions or over-the-counter medications.

Once you decide to begin immunotherapy and this form is signed and returned to our office, it will take approximately two to four weeks to have serum prepared for you and delivered to the location of your choice. Upon arrival at that location, you will be contacted to schedule an appointment to review the instructions for treatment.

You will be required to follow up with your ENT physician or allergist at six-to-12-month intervals during the course of your treatment.

**By signing below, you agree to have your chosen form of immunotherapy mixed and agree to either insurance billing and/or any out-of-pocket expenses incurred for this service. Please indicate your preferred location for weekly injections or to pick up sublingual drops:**

**I would like to start allergy:  SHOTS or  DROPS at the office indicated below.**

**Check one:     Woodbury    Haddonfield    Willingboro    Voorhees    Mount Laurel    Washington Township**

Print Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Patient: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_