

Informed Consent for Allergy Skin Testing and/or Immunotherapy (Allergy Shots)



What is allergy skin testing?

During an allergy evaluation it is frequently necessary to test to various materials to which you may be allergic. These tests are performed by introducing suspected allergens by prick (scratch) or intradermal (beneath the skin surface) techniques. A local reaction which may appear like a bug bite – small, itchy, and red – suggests a positive test.

What is immunotherapy?

Immunotherapy is used to treat your allergies. This requires the injection of allergenic material into your arms on a regular basis. The solution is prepared especially for you and is based on your skin test results and symptoms. The treatment material may contain one or more of the following allergens: Trees, grasses, weeds, molds, dust, dust mite, and animal dander.

What are the benefits of immunotherapy?

By decreasing your allergen sensitivity, you should have fewer allergy symptoms. The amount of improvement is unique to each person. A reasonable expectation is an 80% improvement in 80% of patients, usually occurring within the first year. This means that immunotherapy will help most patients although there is a chance that no benefit will occur from this treatment. There is no way to predict beforehand if you will improve from immunotherapy. If your allergies get better, the treatment is continued for at least 3-5 years.

What are the risks of immunotherapy?

Since you will be receiving injections of substances to which you are allergic, there is the possibility that you may develop an allergic reaction. These reactions are usually mild and limited to the injection site (soreness, redness, warmth, itching, or swelling.)

More severe reactions may include sneezing, nasal congestion, red, itchy, swollen eyes; hives, stomach or uterine cramping, vomiting, diarrhea, swelling of the lips, tongue, and/or throat; wheezing, cough, or asthma symptoms, rapid heart rate, or drop in blood pressure or shock.

Fatal reactions have been described. The risk is estimated to be 1 in 2.5 million shots. This is far less than the death rate associated with lightning strikes, adverse drug reactions, or auto accidents. Since most reactions occur within twenty minutes, we insist, for your safety, that you remain under medical supervision after receiving your shot. You should report all symptoms immediately. Should a reaction occur after the office has closed, emergency medical care should be sought at an urgent-care facility and/or call 911. Allergic reactions can occur with the very first injection or after many years of therapy.

What are alternate treatment choices?

The best therapy for your allergies is avoidance of substances to which you are allergic. In addition, many medications can aid in symptom control. Immunotherapy is elective therapy and you may choose not to receive injections.

In signing this statement, I acknowledge that I have read and fully understand the information contained in the consent form. I agree to proceed with skin testing and/or immunotherapy. If immunotherapy is initiated, I will comply with the stated requirements and schedule annual follow-up visits to review progress. I consent to treatment of adverse reactions to my allergy tests or allergy shots, should they occur, including ambulance transport to an emergency room/hospital. I have been able to ask and have my questions answered to my satisfaction.

Patient Signature _____ **Date** _____

or

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____ **Date** _____

(Allergy shots may be administered to my minor child if circumstances prevent my being present.)

Name label

Nurse Review _____

Date _____