

Allergen immunotherapy injections

Allergy Service

Information for Patients

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What is allergen immunotherapy?

Allergen immunotherapy (or desensitisation) is a treatment for people who are allergic to pollen or venom. It involves having injections of increasing amounts of the thing to which you are allergic (the allergen).

Over time, this will help your body to cope when it comes into contact with this allergen so that you have fewer symptoms in the future.

What does the treatment involve?

There may be 2 parts to the treatment;

1. Up-dosing phase: the amount of allergen in each injection gets bigger each time. How often and how long you have the injections depends on the type of immunotherapy
2. Maintenance phase: you get the same dose at regular times.

The treatment usually lasts for 3 years in total. It is a big commitment for patients.

What happens at each visit?

At each visit the nurse will:

- check that you are well. If you are not, you will not be able to have your injection.
- ask you about any changes in your health or medicines.
- check your blood pressure, pulse and do a simple breathing test.
- give you your injection into your upper arm. You will wait in the clinic for 1 hour afterwards. This is so that we can treat any immediate side effects quickly.
- book your next appointment and fill in your records.

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or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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What are the possible side effects of this treatment?

- It is normal for the injection site to be itchy, red and swollen. You can take antihistamine tablets for this.
- You might feel tired for the rest of the day.
- A serious allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) is rare, but can happen. It would usually happen within the first hour after your injection. This is why we need you to stay in clinic for an hour.

If you have any symptoms of anaphylaxis after you leave the allergy clinic please follow the advice in your anaphylaxis action plan. If you do not have one please tell the allergy nurses. They will give you one.

If you have any side effects, please contact the allergy nurses as soon as possible on **0116 258 3557**. The allergy team will review your treatment.

General advice

Missing an appointment or stopping treatment may affect the dose and progress of your treatment. If you cannot come, please call the team on **0116 258 3557** to change your appointment.

Do:

- If you have been stung please inform the nurses within 48 hours (2 days) so we can review your treatment with the allergy team.
- Take antihistamines before your injection unless told not to by the nurse. This helps to reduce itching, redness and swelling to the injection site.
- Always carry your adrenaline auto injector pens if you have a bee or wasp allergy.
- **Tell us if:**
 - There are any changes to your health or you are ill.
 - You start taking new prescribed medication, even ones you buy yourself.
 - You have been stung or need to have any vaccines.
 - You are pregnant or planning to get pregnant.

Do not:

- Do not do strenuous exercise, drink alcohol or have a hot bath on the day of your injection.
- Do not come to the clinic if you are unwell in any way. Call the team to change your appointment.

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على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
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