

ALLERGEN	AVOIDANCE SUGGESTIONS
House Dust Mite, Fleas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash bedding in hot water (over 70° C) weekly. • Avoid letting pet sleep on overstuffed furniture (Restrict access to bedrooms. If pet sleeps on human's bed, use barrier type covers on mattress/pillow). • Avoid stuffed toys. • Keep pet in uncarpeted rooms when possible. • Frequently damp mop in pet "holding" room. • Change furnace filters frequently and keep humidity to a minimum (30-50%) in the home.
Molds, Storage Mites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep pets out of damp basements. • Use dehumidifiers. • Avoid barns/feed storage areas. • Keep pets indoors while mowing lawns. • Feed good quality pet food and store pet food in air-tight container. • Clean pet food storage areas and bins with chlorine bleach solutions. • Clean and disinfect humidifiers. • Avoid having large numbers of houseplants. • Avoid confining pets to rooms with high moisture levels (bathroom, basement, laundry room). • Prevent access to crawl spaces under house.
Pollens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid fields. • Keep grass cut short. • Rinse pet after exposure to high grasses/weeds. • Keep pet indoors at dusk and early morning during heavy pollen season. • Use air conditioners. • Keep pets inside while mowing lawn.
<p>You can significantly help your allergic pet by making simple environmental changes.</p>	



Veterinarian Notes:

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Immunotherapy for Control of Allergies in Your Dog or Cat



Immunotherapy for control of allergies in your pet

You and your veterinarian have elected to identify the cause of your pet's allergy through testing and to treat with immunotherapy injections. Immunotherapy is one of the safest, most effective long-term treatments for allergy. It is the only therapy that targets the root cause of allergic reactions, unlike other treatments that just mask symptoms.

For immunotherapy to be successful, it is important that you understand what the process involves and what your role is in helping to manage your pet's allergic disease. Allergies can be a frustrating and long-term problem for you and your pet. Be assured that your veterinarian is recommending the best long-term, medically appropriate treatment for this important member of your family.

What is immunotherapy?

Immunotherapy is a medical treatment where allergens (pollens, dust, molds, mites, etc.) to which your pet is allergic are injected in increasing amounts and concentrations. Successful immunotherapy changes the immune system to be less sensitive to these allergens. Using the results of the allergy test and detailed history of the disease, immunotherapy treatment has been formulated to contain the specific allergens identified as causing allergic problems in your pet. The goal of immunotherapy is to reduce the severity of clinical signs and reduce reliance on steroids. Initially your pet will receive injections every 4 to 7 days. The goal is to lengthen the interval between injections to 3 or 4 weeks.

How are the immunotherapy injections given?

Immunotherapy injections contain small quantities of allergens that are injected underneath the skin (subcutaneously). The majority of pets do not object to these injections. Every pet's allergy condition is unique. Therefore, the dose and

interval between allergy treatment injections should be tailored according to your pet's response. For this reason, regular re-evaluations or "re-checks" by your pet's veterinarian (especially during the first year) are essential for achieving the best results.

Is immunotherapy safe?

As with any injectable medication, there is a possible chance of serious allergic reaction to the injection. Such reactions are very rare. If you notice any unusual signs following an immunotherapy injection, such as weakness, labored or difficulty breathing, pale gums, vomiting, diarrhea, collapse or hives, **IMMEDIATELY** contact your veterinarian. These may be signs of serious reactions. It is best that your pet not be heavily exercised or fed for one hour before or after the injection. Also, your pet should be observed for one hour after injection.

Are there other reactions to watch for in my pet?

A small amount of redness and itchiness may be seen at the site of the injection. Some pets will also show increased itchiness immediately after starting injections from a new treatment vial. Contact your veterinarian to discuss any reaction(s) that you notice while your pet is on immunotherapy.

How soon can I expect to see some improvement in my pet from immunotherapy?

Every pet will respond differently to a given medication. In general, it takes several months after therapy begins before significant improvement is seen. It is recommended that immunotherapy be continued for at least twelve months before deciding whether or not immunotherapy is the best way to manage your pet's allergy.

Can my pet receive other medications while on immunotherapy?

Regular skin and coat care, particularly bathing, is an important part of managing your pet's allergy. Your

veterinarian may also prescribe medications such as antihistamines, fatty acids, shampoos, rinses or sprays to help keep your pet comfortable during the early stages of immunotherapy or during allergy season. These other medications and supplements are complementary to immunotherapy.

How often will my pet require immunotherapy injections?

Once your pet's allergies are controlled, you may find that you can increase the time period between maintenance injections to 14 to 28 days.

What if my dog or cat is not doing well on immunotherapy?

Some dogs and cats may not improve following immunotherapy injections. It is critical that you work closely with your veterinarian. Poor response may be due to secondary, often treatable, skin disease such as yeast or bacterial infection as well as flea infestations. In other cases, it may be necessary to change the contents, dosage or concentration of the immunotherapy. In selected cases, it may be beneficial to retest your pet if it is suspected your pet has developed additional hypersensitivities.

Are there any other measures I can take to help my allergic pet?

The table in this brochure outlines environmental control measures to help minimize your pet's exposure to certain allergens. Remember that allergens are airborne and you can significantly help your allergic pet by making some simple environmental changes.

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