

ALLERGY AND ASTHMA ASSOCIATES OF PITTSBURGH  
*Adult and Pediatric Allergy, Asthma, and Clinical Immunology*

Suite 380 Gateway Towers 320 Ft. Duquesne Blvd. Pittsburgh, PA 15222

*At Point State Park*  
(412) 471-3818  
Fax: (412) 471-3657

Mayer Green, M.D., Founder  
Richard L. Green, M.D.  
Andrew G. Vayonis, M.D.  
Thomas L. Mertz, D.O., PharmD.

*Suburban Office:*  
One Alexander Center  
2585 Freeport Road  
Suite 210  
Pittsburgh, PA 15238  
Phone: (412) 828-3800  
Fax: (412) 828-8561

*Diplomats:*  
*American Board of Internal Medicine*  
*American Board of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*

### **WHAT ARE ALLERGY INJECTIONS?**

**Allergy injection therapy (immunotherapy, hyposensitization)** is a highly specific way of treating your allergy disease.

**Your allergy injections will include** those specific, clinically significant allergens to which you are sensitive. This may involve one or two (rarely three) injections. Food allergies do not respond to allergy injections. We will refer to the vials for allergy injections as antigens.

**Injections are given once a week** until you reach your optimal dose—usually in four to six months. The optimal dose is defined as the largest dose tolerated which produces symptomatic relief. Redness or swelling of the size of a 50 cent piece is the largest tolerable local reaction. Some patients do not have local reactions, in which case a maximal dose has been chosen based on scientific evidence and our previous experience. At that point, injections are then given every two weeks until you have had a year of treatment. Injections are then given every two to four weeks for the next year or two. Thereafter the injection frequency is tapered according to your clinical response. One should receive injections until you have had two excellent years in succession. The shortest length of time that an average person requires injections is three to four years.

**Some patients receive immediate benefit** from allergy injections. Optimal benefit is usually realized within 3- months. Your response rate is variable and dependent on your own immune system.

**Allergy injections help** you to live more comfortably with your allergies.

**Reactions to injections** can occur but fortunately are rare and unusually consist of local arm irritation. More severe generalized allergy symptoms following injections are even rarer- but, because there is a slight risk to injections- and because you are receiving injections with potent allergens to which you are sensitive-**we will** insist that they are given in a proper\* controlled medical setting.

**Antigens will be given to you** to take to your doctor if you will be receiving injections outside our office.

**You must wait 15-20 minutes** in your doctor's office following an injection.

**We will give the first injection of a higher strength antigen** in our office.

**We will see you for appropriate follow-up** visits while you are under our management. These visits will become less frequent as you improve and the injection interval is widened.