Controlling Your Allergies

The successful management of allergic symptoms involves these principles:

1. Avoidance of allergens
2. Vaccine therapy to increase tolerance for allergens that cannot be adequately avoided
3. Relief of symptoms

General Measures of Allergen Avoidance

**Pollen** Allergy (Hay Fever)
Pollen are microscopic particles necessary for plant fertilization. Plants that depend on the wind to carry pollen from one plant to another are more likely to be allergic than plants that are pollinated by insects.

1. Avoid the source of pollen during the pollen season (trees in Spring, grass in Summer, weeds in Fall).
2. Avoid outdoor activity in the early morning when pollen is emitted (5am-10am).
4. Grass-allergic individuals should not mow the grass.
5. Weeds in the vicinity of your home should be cut before they pollinate.
6. Certain fresh fruits or vegetables may cause symptoms in pollen-allergic individuals, especially during that pollen season. Eliminate any fresh foods that have caused symptoms.

**Dust** Allergy
Dust mites are microscopic insects living in dust. They grow well in carpeting and bedding. They thrive in humid, warm environments.

1. The mattress and all pillows should be encased in an allergy-proof encasing that closes with a zipper. They need not be waterproof or plastic.
2. Bed sheets should be washed in hot water (>130 degrees Fahrenheit) weekly.
3. Synthetic pillows and cotton sheets are preferred to down-filled bedding.
4. The floor should ideally be bare. If rugs are used, they should be washed weekly. If carpeting is present, vacuuming should be done weekly.
5. No dry dusting. Dusting should be done with dampened cloths.
6. Avoid stuffed animals.
7. Indoor humidity should range between 40%-50%.
**Pet Allergy**  
1. Animals to which you are allergic should not be part of your household, whether indoors or outdoors.  
2. If a pet is in the home, it must be kept out of the bedroom at all times.  
3. If you are in contact with an animal to which you are allergic, wash your hands and change clothes immediately afterwards.

**Mold Allergy**  
Molds are microscopic fungi found both outdoors (in soil, on fallen leaves and vegetation) and indoors (basements, bathrooms, food storage and waste areas, carpets, and upholstery). Mold spores float in the air like pollen. Spore levels may be present at any time of year, affected primarily by weather conditions.  
1. Avoid a damp house or basement. A dehumidifier may be necessary.  
2. Keep walls as dry as possible. Use the exhaust fan in the bathroom during and after a shower. Watch for growth of mildew or mold.  
3. Minimize houseplants, as their soil can be a source of mold growth.  
4. Avoid granaries and decaying vegetation. Barns, cut grass, and dry leaves are often reservoirs for mold.

**General Information Regarding Immunotherapy (Allergy Vaccines or “Shots”)**  
1. Allergy vaccines are given so that a person’s own tolerance to the allergen will increase. This is accomplished slowly, and requires patience and cooperation over a minimum of years. At some point, a person may be given a trial without the vaccines to test whether he has received a persistent benefit from the vaccine. Results of treatment develop slowly. Until a benefit is noted, regular medications for allergic symptoms may still be required.

2. Regularity of injection treatment is important. Select a day of the week that is most convenient for you and make it a habit.

3. Allergic children (and adults) may have unpleasant reactions to many things that are done for them, whether it is feeding, bathing or giving them medications. Occasionally, they may also have unpleasant reactions to allergy injections. The mildest reaction to allergy vaccines is local swelling. More severe reactions include hives, itching of the hands or throat, sneezing, wheezing, coughing, or feeling faint. Although the latter rarely occur, it the primary reason vaccines are to be administered in a physician’s office.

4. If reactions occur, they invariably occur in the 30 minutes following injection. It is required that you stay in the office during this time, and allow the nurse to check you at the end of this time. Occasionally a local swelling may develop up to 24 hours after the injection. Be sure to report any reaction to your physician before the next injection.

5. Also be sure to report any of the following if relevant, before your injection: any current illness (especially wheezing or shortness of breath), new medication such as a beta-blocker (usually given for high blood-pressure or heart conditions), or new pregnancy.
NAME ______________________________________________     DATE ______________________

Allergies to:

☐ DUST MITES (all year)

☐ MOLDS (all year, with rise in Sep-Nov):

☐ POLLEN:  ☐ Trees (Feb-June)  ☐ Ragweed (Aug-1st Frost)
  ☐ Grass (Apr-Aug)  ☐ Weeds (Jun-Oct)
  ☐ English Plantain (Apr-Sep)  ☐ Other

☐ CAT

☐ DOG

☐ FOODS: ______________________________________________________________

☐ OTHER ______________________________________________________________

Medications:

☐ FLUTICASONE, RHINOCORT, NASACORT, NASONEX ______________________

☐ LORATIDINE, CLARINEX, FEXOFENADINE, ZYRTEC _____________________

☐ SINGULAIR  4mg  5mg  10mg  at bedtime ________________________________

☐ ADVAIR DISKUS  100/50  250/50  500/50  one inhalation twice daily_________

☐ FLOVENT, ASMANEX, QVAR, PULMICORT ______________________________

☐ ALBUTEROL _________________________________________________________

☐ ASTELIN  1  2  sprays per nostril twice daily _____________________________

☐ PATANOL, ELASTAT, OPTIVAR, ZADITOR ______________________________

☐ SINUS RINSES ______________________________________________________

☐ OTHER ______________________________________________________________

Call:

☐ Dr. Muniz or Dr. Jani ________________________________________________

☐ Primary Physician __________________________________________________

RETURN TO THIS OFFICE: ______________________________________________
Further information regarding immunotherapy and treatment of allergic diseases can be found through the American Academy of Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology at www.aaaai.org.