

Allergy Department

ALLERGY INJECTIONS PROS & CONS

Advantages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High change of success 2. Less symptoms 3. Less need for medications 4. May help when medications have not helped 5. Unlike testing, you may take medications while on shots
Disadvantages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Takes time to build the dose up 2. People usually do better if they follow the advice to decrease their exposure to allergy factors that are positive on testing. 3. Local reactions are common (such as itchy, red, swollen injection site) 4. Generalized reactions are uncommon (such as asthma, allergies, or rashes). People should not get shots when asthma is worse. 5. Fatalities are very rare (1 per 2.5 million shots)
Alternatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoid allergy factors that cause the symptoms 2. Use medications to treat symptoms

SCHEDULE COMPARISONS

	Regular	Cluster
Set of Injections Per Visit	1	2-3
Starting Schedule	One – Two Times per Week	One Time Per Week
Office Waiting Time	30 minutes	2 hours
Build-Up Time¹	4 – 5 months (two times per week) 8 – 10 months (one time per week)	2 months
Time Schedule²	1-2 times per week – advances 2-3 weeks – dose repeats Over 4 weeks – dose decreases	1 time per week – advances Over 1 week converts to Regular Schedule
Maintenance Schedule	One Time Per Month for 3-5 years	One Time Per Month for 3-5 years
Pretreatment	Optional 1 – 2 hours before * 2 hours with loratadine (Claritin)	Required 1 – 2 hours before * 2 hours with loratadine (Claritin)
# Pretreatment Medications³	Antihistamines	Antihistamine and Leukotriene Receptor Antagonist (LTRA)
Systemic Reaction Rate⁴	1-2%	1-2% with pretreatment medications (much higher without pretreatment)

¹ The dose may be adjusted for long time lapses or for shot reactions

² Time Lapse Adjustments are used to handle vacations, but if you always come in 2-3 weeks between shots, then the dose never advances

³ Medications: A.) Antihistamine such as loratadine (Claritin) or fexofenadine (Allegra).
B.) Leukotriene Receptor Antagonists (LTRA) such as Accolate or Singulair.

⁴ Reactions may include wheezing, chest tightness, coughing, runny nose, stuffy nose, itching all over, rash, flushing, cramping, etc.

Additional Comments:

1. Allergy shots will be reviewed annually with your physician.
2. Tell the nurse immediately if you have a reaction. Don't wait until the time of the arm check.
3. Do NOT ignore reactions that may occur after you have left the office. You should return to our office if we are still open, or go to the Emergency Department if we have already closed. Please report these reactions to the nurse BEFORE you get your next shot.