

HEAD AND NECK SURGERY ASSOCIATES' ALLERGY DEPARTMENT

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our allergy department. We are here to help you with your allergies in any way we can. This booklet has been created to answer as many of your questions as possible. Please take a moment to read it and then save it for future reference.

If you ever have questions or problems, please call us immediately. We will be glad to help.

OFFICE POLICY

OFFICE HOURS

Our allergy departments are open for injections during the hours listed below. If you are on advancing dosages, you will need to wait 20 minutes after receiving your injection so we may inspect the injection site. A doctor must be in the office in order for you to have your dose advanced or if you are getting the first injection from a new vial.

We have tried to provide office hours that are convenient for our patients. We ask that you be at our offices no later than 30 minutes before closing. This affords us adequate time to treat you and if necessary, allows enough time for you to wait after receiving your injection.

We have four conveniently located offices to fit your needs:

FT. THOMAS

40 N. Grand Ave. #101
Ft. Thomas, KY 41075
(859) 781-4900, Ext. 2

FLORENCE

7575 Hwy. #42
Florence, KY 41042
(859) 283-9100, Ext. 2

EDGEWOOD

20 Medical Village Dr., #268
Edgewood, KY 41017
(859) 341-1100, Ext. 2

Dearborn

Ludlow Hill Professional Bldg., Suite 140
368 Bielby Rd.
Lawrenceburg, IN 47025
(812) 537-5510

Monday, Wednesday & Friday (ONLY)

Offices Open Monday - Friday

PLEASE NOTE

First 6 weeks: 1:00 - 4:30

Doctor must be in office

Must wait 20 minutes

Please call first

Every 5 – 10 days

All offices are open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Our physicians are usually in the offices by 1 p.m. Our offices are closed on holidays. Should an office be closed or a doctor not be expected, every effort will be made to inform you in advance.

You are urged to choose the most convenient office to receive your injections. However, if for any reason you need to change locations, **please inform us in advance** so your records can be transferred to the proper office.

FOLLOW UP VISITS

These visits are an important part of your allergy care and management. You will be expected to see your doctor **two to three months** after beginning your injections and once a year thereafter for as long as you continue your allergy treatment. This visit allows for an assessment of your condition and if necessary, changes can be made by your doctor to maximize the effectiveness of your treatment plan.

TAKING INJECTIONS OUTSIDE OF OUR OFFICES

Should you wish to receive your injections at your family doctor's office you may do so at any time. If you would like to receive your injections at home, you must first be on a maintenance dose and tolerating your injections well. We recommend that a trained medical professional give you your injections, but we will train you to give your own injections if you wish. Your vaccine should last nine to ten weeks. After your eighth dose, you should **call our office** to order your next vial of vaccine. You will need to receive the first injection of each new vial in our office with a doctor present. Then you may take the vaccine home.

TREATMENT

Once your evaluation is complete, a treatment plan will be initiated. This treatment may include any or all of the following: avoidance, medication, environmental control, diet control or immunotherapy.

The best and least expensive method of treating your allergy disorder is to avoid the allergy troublemaker.

Elimination diets, skin tests and blood tests may help track down the offending substance. Once an allergy troublemaker is identified it can often be avoided.

When you are allergic to something you cannot avoid especially pollens, molds and house dust, a series of injections may lessen your sensitivity. The injections are administered once a week beginning with a small dose. Each week the dose is increased for a period of six weeks until you reach a maintenance dose.

Keep in mind once you reach a maintenance dose it usually takes **three to six months** for you to notice a difference on your injections. Some people notice a difference right away; it all depends on each individual.

If at any time while on immunotherapy you need to take a supplemental allergy medication to help alleviate allergy symptoms feel free to do so. If you are still having uncontrolled allergy symptoms, please make an appointment to see your doctor.

OF NOTE: We cannot advance the allergy injections unless a doctor is present in the office.

POSSIBLE REACTIONS TO INJECTIONS

Following an injection you may occasionally experience an unusual reaction. This may be very mild or of a more severe nature.

The mild or local reactions are usually represented by swelling of the tissue at the site of the injection, and may be accompanied by some itching, redness, fever and possibly some discomfort. This type of reaction may be controlled by applying ice packs to the area of the injection or by using any type of cortisone cream or a cream that relieves itching. The patient may also want to take Benadryl depending on the severity of the reaction.

However, if the reaction is too severe and the patient experiences swelling about the eyes and lips, severe coughing or sneezing, severe hives or difficulty in breathing, epinephrine (Adrenalin) should be injected according to the Epi-Pen instructions. The patient should be taken to the emergency room immediately or 911 called.

Please notify our office upon your return from the emergency room.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS FOR
DUST AND MOLD ALLERGIES

Avoidance of identifiable allergens and irritants is the most effective method of managing allergic disease. There are several measures that can be taken to achieve this goal without excessive alteration of lifestyle.

DUST CONTROL AND AVOIDANCE

House dust, dust mites and molds are present in the atmosphere throughout the year in varying concentrations. House dust is a fine, gray, powdery material that accumulates in out-of-the-way places around the home. It has been found that the mite content from samples of dust on the surface of mattresses was much higher than samples from living room dust. Mites feed on the scales of human skin.

Dust control must start with the bedroom. Remove all wool blankets, quilts and comforters; substitute with Dacron or another synthetic fiber. Remove heavy draperies and Venetian blinds and use only light, washable curtains.

Remove all stuffed animals from the children's room

Cover the pillow, mattress and box springs with allergen-impermeable dust-proof coverings.

Pillows can be placed in a freezer for a day to kill mites and then fluffed in clothes dryer to remove dead mites if casings are too uncomfortable.

Use pillows made of Dacron.

Keep the closets clean and their doors closed.

Clean bookshelves, cabinets, desks and night tables.

Keep furnaces clean and change air filters often. Cover vents in rooms with filters. A piece of cheesecloth can be used for this.

Pets are sometimes a problem for allergic people. Keep animals out of the bedroom at all times.

Change sheets and pillowcases two or three times a week. Wipe down the covers of pillow, mattress and box springs each time.

Keep humidity below 50%; less than 33% is more effective. A dehumidifier can be used but may cause nasal drying.

Vacuum carpets and upholstery with a HEPA vacuum.

MOLD CONTROL AND AVOIDANCE

Year-round allergic symptoms to molds are considerably less common than seasonal symptoms. As a rule, the year-round symptoms occur in individuals exposed to large numbers of molds in their homes or in their occupations. The most common indoor and outside molds in most parts of the United States are Alternans and Hormodendrum (Cladosporium). Regional differences do occur and Aspergillus, Penicillium, Fusarium, Mucor and Pollariaria are other frequent offenders.

The presence of molds in and around the home is not the result of poor housekeeping. Warmth and high humidity are critical factors in promoting mold growth as is, the age of the home, amount of ventilation, geographical location and other influences. The knowledge of what promotes mold growth and where they lurk, however, can help the homemaker learn to combat this health hazard.

In the home, furniture, mattresses and stuffed animals are particularly good harborers of molds. An allergy-conscious person may have discarded an old feather pillow in favor of a foam rubber pillow only to find that such pillows may, with aging, support mold growth. Molds also attack paper products, wallpaper paste, paint, wood, leather and fibers that are natural and synthetic. They have been found on rubber gaskets around refrigerator doors and in refrigerator drip trays. Damp cellars are another fertile ground for the growth of molds. Other mold hot spots around the house include areas of deep shade or heavy vegetation, garbage pails, air conditioning systems, bathrooms, humidifiers, piles of leaves or logs or any place where fresh food is stored.

Molds may be dormant throughout the winter months but will flourish with the first rise in temperature. Activities such as raking leaves, gardening and mowing grass may release molds into the air, thus precipitating allergy attacks in mold-sensitive people. The patient suffering such symptoms may mistakenly blame the allergy on trees, plants or grasses. Summer cottages are especially prone to mold contamination since they are closed for long periods of time. This is also true of resort hotels and motels.

It is possible that someone allergic to inhaled molds may develop symptoms after eating foods processed with molds or contaminated by them. Possible sources of this mold exposure include:

- Cheeses
- Dried, candied fruits
- Beer, cider, wine
- Pickled or smoked meats & fish
- Yeast used in baking
- Mushrooms
- Melons and tomatoes
- Soy sauce
- Any obvious mold-containing food

There are occupational exposures encountered among furniture repairmen working with old bedding and overstuffed furniture, farmers or botanists who work with vegetation and mill workers that are exposed to molds in grain and mill dust. Loggers, brewers, dairymen and others exposed to damp, musty work environments are also at risk of developing and triggering symptoms of mold allergy.

SOURCES OF MOLD GROWTH IN AND ABOUT THE HOME

1. Humidifier, furnace, radiators
2. Air conditioners
3. Sauna baths
4. Refrigerator motor compartment, rubber seal molding, drip trays and inside the unit
5. Bare plumbing with condensation. (To avoid this, pipes can be wrapped with insulation)
6. Leaky plumbing
7. Bathroom walls, shower, tub and shower curtain
8. Moist crawl space
9. Moldy products, trash in house, basement, garage and outbuildings
10. Attic
11. House plants, herbarium, fish bowl and greenhouses
12. Shrubbery close to the house
13. Lawn mowing
14. Immediate environment: woods, streams, ponds, lakes and puddles
15. Nearby mills, elevators or grain facilities
16. Snuff, if inhaled
17. Fireplace wood
18. Libraries, books, newspapers and magazines
19. Bird roosts, pigeons, blackbirds and starlings
20. Cosmetics
21. Solar heating systems

STEPS TO CONTROL MOLD EXPOSURE

- Discard any old newspapers, magazines, books, old furniture, bedding and clothing; eliminate dusty areas.
- Moisture-proof the basement or crawlspace and keep these areas dry with a dehumidifier; maintain adequate ventilation.
- Remove houseplants, aquaria, herbaria and dried flower arrangements from the house.
- Clothes dryers should be vented to the outside.
- Pillows may be tumble-dried at 160° for a few minutes to get rid of the dust and mold spores.
- Allergen-proof encasings may be used to cover pillows, mattresses and box springs.
- In the cold climates snow on the roof may melt, drain down to the eaves, and run up under the shingles into the attic. This may result in massive mold growth. To prevent this, sweep snow from roof; use a deicer in the valleys and heat a cable in the eaves trough and drain.
- Air conditioning the home, car and business will help to cut down circulating spores.
- An electrostatic precipitator will eliminate most of the circulating spores and will help greatly in maintaining a clean home.
- Keep clothes closets well ventilated and dry. Keeping a light bulb burning may do the trick. Keep closet doors closed.
- Upper level bedrooms or apartments are drier than basement rooms.
- Peeling of exterior paint or discolored, moldy, mildewed interior walls can indicate moisture inside the wall. This can be eliminated by a vapor barrier.
- Add a mold inhibitor to paint before painting.
- An allergy mask may be worn when working in or cleaning highly contaminated areas.

POLLEN CONTROL AND AVOIDANCE

If you are sensitive to ragweed or grass pollen and are about to encounter the season, which is always accompanied by severe symptoms, there are rules to follow that may help maintain comfort.

Ideally, the avoidance of hay fever symptoms can be accomplished by moving from the region in which pollen counts are highest. Southwestern Ohio is a region of exceptionally high counts of grass pollen (May 10 through July 31), and ragweed pollen (August 15 through September 30). If the summer has been hot as well as humid, mold spores may cause additional problems (June 15 through October 31).

Ragweed sufferers can obtain relief by visiting Northern Michigan, the southern part of Florida, or most regions in the United States west of the Rocky Mountains. Most of us are unable to do this. However, some comfort during the season can be found by remaining in an air-conditioned atmosphere as much as possible, providing the temperature is not too low – ideally 72°. (Allergic people are very sensitive to chilling). At the height of the season, avoid “saturation atmosphere” situations, e.g. driving across the countryside in an open automobile, golf courses, baseball diamonds, picnic areas, etc. Filtered bedroom air-conditioners can offer relief for nighttime rest.

We have found that controlling the diet during the height of the season is helpful. Foods advisedly restricted are those that seem to be harmful to most ragweed and grass pollen sufferers. “Concomitant allergy” refers to food that produces a reaction only in the presence of an inhalant allergen, usually pollen. The same reaction can also occur with a dust allergy. These dietary rules do not apply to all patients.

Please see the list on the following page.

CONCOMITANT AND SYNERGISTIC

ALLERGENS

FOODS TO BE AVOIDED DURING SEASON

Ragweed Milk, melons & bananas

Grass Legumes (beans, peas, soybean), grains

Cedar Beef, yeasts

Elm Milk

Oak Eggs

Birch Apples

Dust Peanuts

DEFINITIONS OF MULTIPLE ANTIGENS

MOLDS

ALTERNARIA	This mold grows in soil, leaves and tree bark. It is found in highest concentration from late spring into fall, especially from noon until 3:00 p.m.
ASPERGILLUS	This is a common soil mold which also grows on stored food products under damp conditions. One species is common on wet surfaces in bathrooms and in drip pans of refrigerators as well as other kitchen appliances.
CLADOSPORIUM	This mold grows on organic debris in the soil and dead leaves. It can also be found on old books or leather, and causes a musty odor. The highest levels occur from mid-summer to December and its spore's peak in the air from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This mold increases drastically in the atmosphere just before it rains.
EPICOCCUM	This mold is commonly found on decayed vegetation, plant leaves and uncooked fruit.
MUCOR	This mold appears as black dots on shower curtains and plumbing. It can grow in any type of damp atmosphere.
PENICILLIUM	A common bread and fruit mold, it can grow on any other type of organic material as well.

DEFINITIONS OF MULTIPLE ANTIGENS

(Continued)

POLLENS

BIRCH
COTTONWOOD

Birch and Cottonwood trees pollinate between early spring and mid-summer, peaking in April.

MAPLE
ELM

Maple and Elm trees pollinate between early spring and mid-summer, peaking in March and April.

HICKORY
OAK

Hickory and Oak trees pollinate from early summer to fall, peaking in May and June.

WHITE ASH

White Ash pollinates early spring, peaking in March thru May.

MOUNTAIN CEDAR

Mountain Cedar pollinates in the winter, peaking in December and January.

WHITE PINE

White Pine pollinates early spring, mid-summer, peaking in May thru June.

GRASSES

BERMUDA
JOHNSON

Pollination for Bermuda and Johnson grasses peak from May to July.

JUNE (KENTUCKY BLUE)

Peak pollination times for this grass is from May to June.

DEFINITIONS OF MULTIPLE ANTIGENS

(Continued)

WEEDS

ENGLISH PLANTAIN
YELLOW DOCK

This weeds' peak pollination times are from May to July.

RAGWEED

Ragweed peaks from August to October, ending with the first frost.

DUST

D. FARINAE
D. PTERONYSSINUS

These are microscopic insects that live in the stuffing of furniture, mattresses, pillows and bedding material. They are also found in house dust.

Here at Head and Neck Surgery Associates' Allergy Department we are pleased to serve you. **Please do not hesitate to call us** with any questions or problems concerning your allergy care.