

# Sublingual Immunotherapy / Allergy Drop Treatment

Sublingual immunotherapy, also known as allergy drops, helps your body learn to tolerate what is causing your allergic reactions (pollen, foods, mold, etc.). Instead of getting an allergy shot, you take three doses of a personalized liquid medication under your tongue daily.

Allergy drops contain increasing amounts of allergens that trigger your reactions — enough to stimulate your immune system, but not enough to cause a negative reaction.

Typically taking 3-5 years, allergy therapy retrains your immune system to tolerate allergens and stop triggering symptoms long after treatment is done.

For environmental allergies, allergy drops are 70-80% effective. The goal of treatment for food allergy varies. For those with mild to moderate allergies, it may be possible to reintroduce allergic foods back into the diet. For those with severe or life-threatening allergies, the goal may be to reduce the likelihood of a severe allergic reaction to an accidental exposure.

If interested in beginning or learning more about allergy drops, we can talk in more detail at your appointment or you can visit [allergychoices.com/allergy-drop-treatment](http://allergychoices.com/allergy-drop-treatment)



## Appointment preparation

Please have all allergy and lab-related records from other facilities faxed to New Kingdom Healthcare at least one week prior to your scheduled appointment. **Fax to (952) 300-2558.**

If you are currently taking allergy drops and wish to continue, we also need your LAST dosing record faxed.

## What to expect at your first appointment

Skin testing and/or blood testing will be done at your first visit. Skin prick testing does not involve needles, but you need to avoid ALL antihistamines **at least 5 days prior to your appointment** to ensure the most accurate skin testing.

### **AVOID taking the following common antihistamines:**

- Over-the-counter Medications:
  - Zyrtec/cetirizine, Allegra/fexofenadine, Benadryl/diphenhydramine, Claritin/loratadine, Dramamine, Xyzal
- Natural antihistamines:
  - D-hist (Jr.), Quercetin, High dose Vitamin C (>2,000/day)
- Herbals:
  - Licorice, Green tea, Saw Palmetto, St. John's Wart, Feverfew



If you are taking any medication for hypertension or depression or have any questions, please reach out to our Allergy Nurse by calling (952) 999-0333. A complete list of all medications to avoid is on the next page.

## How long will I need to take my drops?

Most patients who follow daily treatment instructions finish in [three to five years](#). It also depends on your type of allergies, severity, and how well you follow treatment. It may take longer for complex allergies.

Many patients say they start to feel better within a few months.

## Will medical insurance cover the costs?

Most insurance companies cover testing and office visit charges, but may not cover allergy drop prescriptions. Check with your insurer. Visit [allergychoices.com/for-patients/allergy-drop-cost/](http://allergychoices.com/for-patients/allergy-drop-cost/) for the most up-to-date information on cost.

The good news is allergy drops are affordable, and the cost for a few years of treatment is typically significantly less than life-long allergy medication co-pays, frequent medical appointments, and lost time from work/school. You can use your pre-tax Flex (FSA) and Health Savings Account (HSA) to pay for treatment.

## The La Crosse Method™ Protocol

We have been trained in the La Crosse Method Protocol because it offers a comprehensive, safe, and effective approach to treat a broad range of allergic conditions.

When diagnosing a patient through the La Crosse Method Protocol, your “allergic fingerprint” is identified through an exam, medical history, and testing. Then we develop your treatment based on your specific level of sensitivity to the precise things that cause your reactions.

Allergy drops are customized to your needs in an optimal dose that allows you to build tolerance, and because they are unique to you, there’s a better margin of safety.

You can receive treatment for multiple allergies at once. Your allergy drop prescription is in a glycerin preservative base that keeps antigens stable at room temperature. As your allergy treatment journey progresses, you will be prescribed stronger doses as your tolerance builds to individual allergens. It’s a personalized treatment approach unique to you.

## Follow-up appointments

After your initial allergy appointment and testing, you’ll be seen following this schedule until you complete treatment:

- **3 months later** — follow-up appointment in person or via telemedicine.
- **6 months later** — follow-up appointment in person or via telemedicine.
- **Once per year** — food allergy testing is repeated annually, repeat environmental testing is optional.

## Questions or concerns?

Call our Allergy Nurse at (952) 999-0333

## Medication restrictions for skin testing

Please review the list of medications below that we request you stop taking for a certain time period before your appointment. These medications can affect your skin testing results. If you continue your medications, please let your provider know at your appointment. If you are taking daily oral steroids, please check with us to see if any modifications are needed. **Please keep this sheet for future reference.** Please note this list is not inclusive of all medications. Contact your provider with other questions.

### Stop taking **1 week** before your appointment

Axid (Nizatidine)

Elavil/Vanatrip (Amitriptyline)\*\*

Olepto, Desyrel (Trazadone)

Pepcid (Famotidine)

Tagamet (Cimetidine)

Zantac (Ranitidine)

If it is not possible to stop these medications before your visit, **please contact our office** so that we may substitute another medication before your scheduled appointment.

### Stop taking **5 days** before your appointment

#### PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS OR OVER-THE-COUNTER

##### ANTIHISTAMINES:

Allegra (Fexofenadine)

AlleRx

Antivert/Bonine (Meclizine)

Astelin/Astepro (Azelastine)

Atarax/Vistaril (Hydroxyzine)

Benadryl (Diphenhydramine)

Bromfed/Dimetapp Allergy

(Brompheniramine)

Chlorpheniramine

Cardec (DM) Chlor-Trimeton

Deconamine Extendryl

Nasohist B Rhinosyn

Sudafed Plus Triaminic

Clarinet (Desloratadine)

Claritin/Alavert (Loratadine)

Dexchlor ER (Dexchlorpheniramine)

Dramamine (Dimenhydrinate)

Dymista (Azelastine & Fluticasone)

Optimine (Azatadine)

Pelamine

Periactin (Cyproheptadine)

Phenergan (Promethazine)

Polaramine (Dexchlorpheniramine)

Rynatan

Tavist-D (Clemastine)

Triplen (Tripelennamine)

Xyzal (Levocetirizine)

Zyrtec (Cetirizine)

#### COMBINATION MEDICATIONS\*:

Tylenol Cold & Sinus

Pain/PM medications

Vicks Formula 44 (Doxylamine)

Vicks Multi-Symptom Nyquil

\* Cold & sleep aid medications may contain antihistamines.

#### SLEEP AIDS & ANTIDEPRESSANTS\*\*:

Anafranil

Desipiramine

Desyrel

Doxepin

Nortriptyline

Sinequan

\*\* These medications should not be modified without talking to your prescribing physician. Please notify the clinic in advance if you are taking any of these medications.

#### HERBAL SUPPLEMENTS

Various supplements including Vitamin C, probiotics, butterbur, St. John's Wort, etc., may have an impact on skin testing results.

Discontinue ALL herbal supplements 5 days prior to testing. Contact your provider if you have questions regarding specific supplements.

### Check with your provider

#### BETA BLOCKERS FOR HYPERTENSION \*\*\*:

Betapace (Sotalol)

Blocadren (Timolol Maleate)

Brevibloc (Esmolol)

Cartrol (Carteolol)

Coreg (Carvedilol)

Corgard/Corzide (Nadolol)

Inderal (Propranolol)

Inderide (Propranolol HCTZ)

Kerlone (Betaxolol HCl)

Levatol (Penbutolol Sulfate)

Lopressor (Metoprolol Tartrate)

Normodyne (Labetalol)

Normozide (Labetalol HCl)

Sectral (Acebutolol HCl)

Tenormin (Atenolol)

Tenoretic (Atenolol Chlorthalidone)

Timolide (Timolol Maleate)

Toprol-XL (Metoprolol Succinate)

Trandate (Labetalol)

Visken (Pindolol)

Zebeta (Bisoprolol Fumarate)

Ziac (Bisoprolol Fumarate HCTZ)

\*\*\* If you take a beta blocker, please contact your doctor. They may ask you to pause taking a dose prior to your visit.

### The following medications are okay to continue taking:

Aciphex (Rabeprazole)

All asthma inhalers

Most non-drowsy medications

Mucinex (Guaifenesin)

Nasal sprays

(except Astelin and Dymista)

Nexium (Esomeprazole)

Prevacid (Lansoprazole)

Prilosec (Omeprazole)

Singulair (Montelukast)

Sudafed (Pseudoephedrine)



# Allergy Drop Instructions



## First-time use of your new drop bottle and dispenser

**Red (environmental) or Blue (food) Bottles:** Each bottle is a 3 month (90 day) supply.

Your drop bottle dispenser has been set up to deliver a precise dose of antigen with each pump.

**Priming the dispenser** — To begin using your dispenser, remove the colored safety clip and push down on the pump several times firmly and quickly until a drop is released. You may need to prime the pump again if your bottle remains unused for an extended time. The safety clip should be kept from small children as it may pose a choking hazard.

**Taking your dose** — After the clip is removed, rest the pump's dispensing arm on your lower front teeth. Push the pump down firmly and quickly to release the dose under your tongue.

Replace the clip when you are finished to prevent accidental release of drops.

**One dose equals one full depression of the pump.**

## Take three doses under your tongue every day

The goal is to consistently expose your immune system to the allergen proteins in your prescription.

### Want faster results?

Research suggests that spreading doses throughout the day could help you feel better, faster.

Try taking:

- One in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one at night
- Two doses in the morning, one at night, or vice versa

If you miss doses during the day, don't worry! Catch up on doses before bed. If you miss a day or two, restart so you don't lose momentum. Some amount of antigen stays in your mouth up to 36 hours. If you miss more than 14 days, contact your prescriber before restarting.

## Hold your tongue still for 30 seconds after taking your drops; then you can swallow

This allows the mouth's specialized dendritic cells to capture allergen proteins and pull them under the surface.

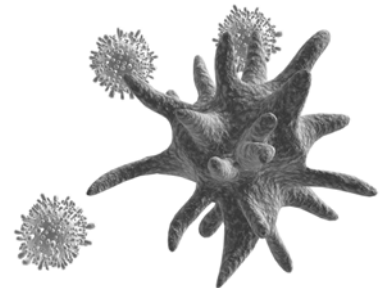
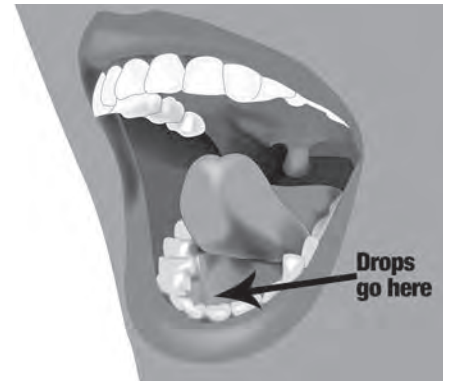
## Try not to eat or drink 10 minutes before or after you take your dose

This allows your mouth's immune cells to focus on processing the allergen proteins in your drops, without being distracted by other proteins.

## If you're taking both red and blue bottle drops, you can take them at the same time

During any given instance, you can take the red bottle and blue bottle drops one after another. Try to take them on opposite sides under your tongue during one administration (for example, red on the right and blue on the left) so that you maximize the use of immune cells in the floor of your mouth. Randomly switch up the sides; that may work better.

**TIP: Keep your bottle(s) near room temperature; a bedroom or kitchen counter works great.**



Microscopic view of a dendritic cell capturing allergen protein.



## How do I know what's in my treatment?

In your prescription packet, you'll find an insert with details noting which antigens are included under "Lot ingredient information." This also lists the strength of each ingredient by dilution (Dil#1 - 7, typically). The dilution number is matched to your level of sensitivity. You'll typically start with a higher dilution number (weaker strength) and as you build tolerance, the dilution number will decrease, with 1 being the strongest concentration.

## "Slow-Start" or "What to do if you have mild allergy symptoms from the drops" instructions:

Symptom examples: mild tongue tingling, sneezing, flare of rash, or any of your typical allergy symptoms.

- Take only 1 dose daily for 4-7 days or until you no longer have symptoms from the drops.
- Then increase to 1 dose twice per day for 4-7 days or until you tolerate this dose.
- Then increase to 1 dose 3 times per day and continue at this dose.

Your dose has been formulated to minimize symptoms. If you have more than very mild and tolerable symptoms when you start taking a new bottle, or if the above regimen does not reduce your symptoms, please contact your provider.

## General Reactions:

Rarely, generalized reactions may occur, including:

- Mild to moderate urticaria (hives) with rash, swelling or itching on more than one part of the body. This typically occurs within minutes of taking a dose.
- Angioedema has **not** been reported using this protocol, but has been reported rarely with other protocols. Symptoms include swelling of the ears, tongue, lips, throat, intestines, hands, and feet – alone or in any combination. This may occasionally be accompanied by asthma symptoms and may progress to anaphylactic shock. The primary danger lies in suffocation from airway swelling. Angioedema may occur within minutes of taking a dose and requires immediate medical attention.
- Anaphylactic shock, the rarest complication, has not been reported using this protocol but has rarely occurred using other protocols. Symptoms include acute asthma, low blood pressure, unconsciousness, and potentially death. If you have a history of these reactions, you are required to have an epinephrine injector available when taking your drops.

## Questions?

If you have several questions between appointments, please call your provider. For more information about prescriptions, contact the Allergychoices Pharmacy at (866) 793-1680.

## To Refill Your Prescription

You can reorder drops by calling your provider or Allergychoices. Please place your order at least 14 days before you run out to avoid breaks in treatment.

## IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTE

In the unlikely event you experience swelling, wheezing, or difficulty breathing, call 9-1-1. Do not resume drops until you have discussed it with your provider.

