

Southwest Allergy and Asthma Associates

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For further information about allergies and asthma and to download this and other handouts visit us at www.elpasoallergy.com
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Immunotherapy Facts

What is Immunotherapy?

Immunotherapy is the treatment in which we give small amounts of pollen or mold spores that a patient is allergic to desensitize the immune system and improve or cure a person's allergies. This is done by injection. Immunotherapy is the only treatment available that addresses the cause of allergies and does not just relieve the symptoms.

1. ALLERGY SHOTS – LONGEST EXPERIENCE/SAFEST



Allergy injections are the type of immunotherapy that's been around the longest since 1910 and therefore are the most studied. A majority of patients will become desensitized to the allergens contained in the shots and no longer have allergic reactions to those substances.

Allergy shots can provide relief from symptoms that continue after the treatment is complete. In children, allergy shots help to prevent them from developing new allergies and allergy-related asthma later in life.

The build-up phase of 5 months involves receiving injections with increasing amounts of the allergens once a week.

The maintenance phase begins once the highest dose is reached. The injections are then given once a month for three years.

2. CLUSTER IMMUNOTHERAPY – QUICKEST



Same effectiveness as with normal allergy injections, however the buildup is much faster. Patients come in weekly for one month and then only once a month for their maintenance dose.

During the weekly sessions several shots are given over a two hour period. Since several shots are given there is a slightly higher risk of an allergic reaction.

Advantages: Four months of weekly shots are skipped. Effectiveness is the same as with normal allergy shots.

Disadvantages: A very small chance of a severe allergic reaction is present. In order to decrease this chance, three different medications will be given to you as a premedication before your two hour shot session.