



Patient Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Test \_\_\_\_\_

# Allergy Resource Guide

Allergies can affect anyone, regardless of age, gender, race or socioeconomic factors. Sometimes allergy symptoms even appear unexpectedly in people who have never had them before! Although the exact genetic factors are not yet understood, there is a hereditary tendency. Allergies can affect all parts of our bodies, including the ears, eyes, intestinal tract, nose, throat, lungs and skin, to name just a few. Ask anyone who suffers, and they'll tell you it's more than just an annoyance; for some, allergies can even be life-threatening. Learning about your types of allergies is the first step to treatment and to returning to the lifestyle you deserve!

## There are three main goals of inhalant allergy management:

1. **Identify potential allergies through testing**
2. **Remove or avoid antigens by understanding and managing your environment**
3. **Develop a medical treatment plan specific to the patient**

### ALLERGY TESTING WORKUP



#### Trees (Spring)

- \_\_\_ Red Maple
- \_\_\_ White Hickory
- \_\_\_ American Elm
- \_\_\_ Eastern Sycamore
- \_\_\_ River Birch
- \_\_\_ Eastern Cottonwood
- \_\_\_ Black Willow
- \_\_\_ Red Mulberry
- \_\_\_ Red Ash
- \_\_\_ White Oak
- \_\_\_ Red Cedar
- \_\_\_ Bald Cypress
- \_\_\_ Bayberry
- \_\_\_ Sweet Gum
- \_\_\_ Loblolly Pine



#### Grasses (Summer)

- \_\_\_ Timothy
- \_\_\_ Perennial Rye
- \_\_\_ Sweet Vernal
- \_\_\_ Velvet
- \_\_\_ Johnson
- \_\_\_ Bahia
- \_\_\_ Bermuda



#### Animals (Epidermal)

- \_\_\_ Cat
- \_\_\_ Dog Epithelium
- \_\_\_ Dog Dander/Pelt
- \_\_\_ Mouse Epithelia
- \_\_\_ Feather Mix
- \_\_\_ Horse



#### Dust Mites

- \_\_\_ D. Pteronyssinus
- \_\_\_ D. Farinae



#### Weeds (Fall)

- \_\_\_ Rough Pigweed
- \_\_\_ Ragweed Mix
- \_\_\_ Lamb's Quarter
- \_\_\_ English Plantain
- \_\_\_ Dog Fennel
- \_\_\_ Sheep Sorrel
- \_\_\_ Nettle
- \_\_\_ Cocklebur
- \_\_\_ Common Mugwort
- \_\_\_ Rough Marsh Elder
- \_\_\_ Baccharis



#### Molds

- \_\_\_ Aspergillus
- \_\_\_ Alternaria
- \_\_\_ Clado Herbarum
- \_\_\_ Clado Sphaerospermum
- \_\_\_ Penicillium
- \_\_\_ Drechslera (Curvularia)
- \_\_\_ Pullalaria
- \_\_\_ Fusarium Mix
- \_\_\_ Mucor
- \_\_\_ Rhizopus
- \_\_\_ Epicoccum Nigrum
- \_\_\_ Bipolaris
- \_\_\_ Candida
- \_\_\_ Rhodotorula
- \_\_\_ Trichophyton



#### Cockroach

- \_\_\_ German Cockroach
- \_\_\_ American Cockroach

### Your Follow-Up Appointment Has Been Scheduled For:

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ Location \_\_\_\_\_

**Please contact Palmetto ENT & Allergy if you have any questions at 803-256-7076.**

# Management of Inhalant Allergies and Your Environment

## DUST AND DUST MITES

One of the most important perennial airborne allergens involved in most allergic problems is the dust mite, House dust mites are microscopic, spider-like arthropods that are normal inhabitants in homes. They feed on human skin scales and are found in large numbers on mattresses and bed sheets. They can also be found in upholstered furniture, rugs, pillows and stuffed toys. The mite bodies range from 10-40 microns in size. Due to their small size, the fecal pellets can be a major cause of bronchial asthma. Household mites increase in numbers (many thousands per grams of dust) during periods of high humidity (60 to 75% relative humidity).



### Keys to minimizing and managing dust mite impact:

1. Enclose mattresses, box springs and pillows in impermeable covers
2. Wash bedding in hot water weekly, including mattress pads
3. Wipe vinyl mattress covers with a damp cloth before making the bed
4. Do not use fans in bedrooms, including ceiling fans
5. Do not store anything under the bed
6. Do not use the bedroom as a storage space
7. Keep closet doors closed
8. Do not store winter clothes with summer clothes
9. Eliminate clothes not used in two years
10. Eliminate dust catchers (curtains, stuffed animals, etc.)
11. Vacuum thoroughly at least once a week
12. Change vacuum cleaner bags frequently
13. Damp-mop hardwood floors
14. Dust furniture frequently
15. Install high-efficiency (HEPA) central heating/air-conditioning filters and clean monthly

## POLLEN (TREES, GRASSES, WEEDS)

Pollen allergies are usually seasonal. Your allergic response may change if you are particularly susceptible to the pollens produced in a certain season. Only seed-bearing plants produce pollen. Not all pollens are allergenic. Ornamental plants produce heavy waxy pollen that is non-toxic. Shifts in the intensity or direction of the wind will change your degree of sensitivity. Staying indoors may minimize your symptoms.



Certain pollens are present year-round, particularly the grasses. This group includes ragweed and the grasses that are the most important cause of seasonal rhinitis (hay fever). Certain trees, such as cedars, pollinate in the winter. Some elm and oak trees pollinate during the fall and ragweed season. Although mainly outdoor airborne allergens, pollen grains can be transported into the home through open windows and doors.

### Key prevention strategies are:

- Wear a face mask outdoors
- Avoid outdoor activities during high pollen times, which typically rise during the morning, peak about midday and then start to fall
- Keep windows closed and use central heat and air conditioning

Pollen Seasons	TREES	January through May
	GRASSES	March through October
	WEEDS	June through October

## ANIMALS (EPIDERMAL)

Any non human animal dander can sensitize an allergic individual. The most common sources are cats, dogs and the furs and feathers used in clothing and stuffed materials. It is extremely difficult to remove dander from a home with carpeting, upholstered furniture and draperies.



### Four strategies to reduce the impact of animal dander:

1. Don't let pets sleep in the bedroom
2. Bathe them regularly
3. Brush or groom them outside
4. Remove feather pillows and comforters

# Molds

Another group of airborne factors in most allergic problems are mold spores. The molds (or fungi) are simple plants lacking stems, roots, leaves and chlorophyll. They do not require sunlight for growth and thrive in almost every environment. Many of the allergenically important fungi reproduce by spores, which are dispersed by wind, water or insects. Most mold exposure occurs outdoors, making it difficult to avoid; however, mold can also be found indoors. Spoiled food, garbage containers, shower curtains, sinks, cool mist vaporizers, humidifiers, window-sills, damp basements and soiled upholstery are common habitats for molds. Molds found in the home are causes of ongoing allergy symptoms. You will be tested for mold spores common to our area and treated specifically for the ones to which you are sensitive.



Molds are a year-round factor and, if you are allergic, will be included in your treatments each week.

- Use exhaust fans to reduce excess humidity in the house. Dry, cool air and sunlight are effective in reducing mold growth
- Dust-proof covers for mattresses, box springs and pillows are also necessary to control mold
- Remove all obviously moldy items, such as shoes, luggage, books, plants, wallpaper and carpet
- Check bathroom walls, floors and shower curtains for mold growth. Dry damp bathroom walls after showers
- Use Aqueous Zephiran (obtained at drugstores) in a 17% solution for cleaning to protect against mold. Dilute one ounce of concentrate with one gallon of water
- Sprinkle Borax in damp areas
- Run one cup of vinegar through a regular cycle on your dishwasher every four to six weeks
- Clean refrigerators periodically with a vinegar solution
- Check windows, air conditioners, vaporizers, humidifiers, refrigerator rubber gaskets and drip pans for mold growth
- Remove houseplants, especially from the bedroom and adjoining bathroom, to less frequently visited areas of the home
- Vent the clothes dryer to the outside of the house
- Avoid leaving damp clothes in the washing machine or closets
- Use Borax in the laundry to reduce mold growth
- Avoid raking damp leaves and wear a face mask while performing yard work
- Shrubs, vines, leaves and debris should not be permitted to accumulate near exterior walls
- Direct water away from the house by using splash blocks or drainage pipes
- When building a new home, put heavy polyethylene under the basement foundation and outside foundation walls
- Install a dehumidifier to cross-ventilate and heat basement areas
- Avoid sleeping beneath ceiling fans or in below-ground rooms
- Maintain humidity around 40 to 50% in the house. High humidity promotes the growth of dust mites and molds. Low humidity dries the bronchial passages and nose, causing discomfort

# Your Treatment Plan

## WHAT ARE THE “BUILDUP” CHOICES?

**Conventional buildup:** Allergy injections/shots are given as often as one or two times weekly until the maintenance step is reached. Depending on the visit frequency, this build up process generally takes anywhere from 10 to 15 weeks. These injections do not require a provider visit, and the recommended office wait time after the injection is at least 20 minutes. You may schedule your appointment on a per-visit basis, or you may schedule your appointments in advance, up to one month at a time.

## ARE THERE IMMUNOTHERAPY ALTERNATIVES TO SHOTS?

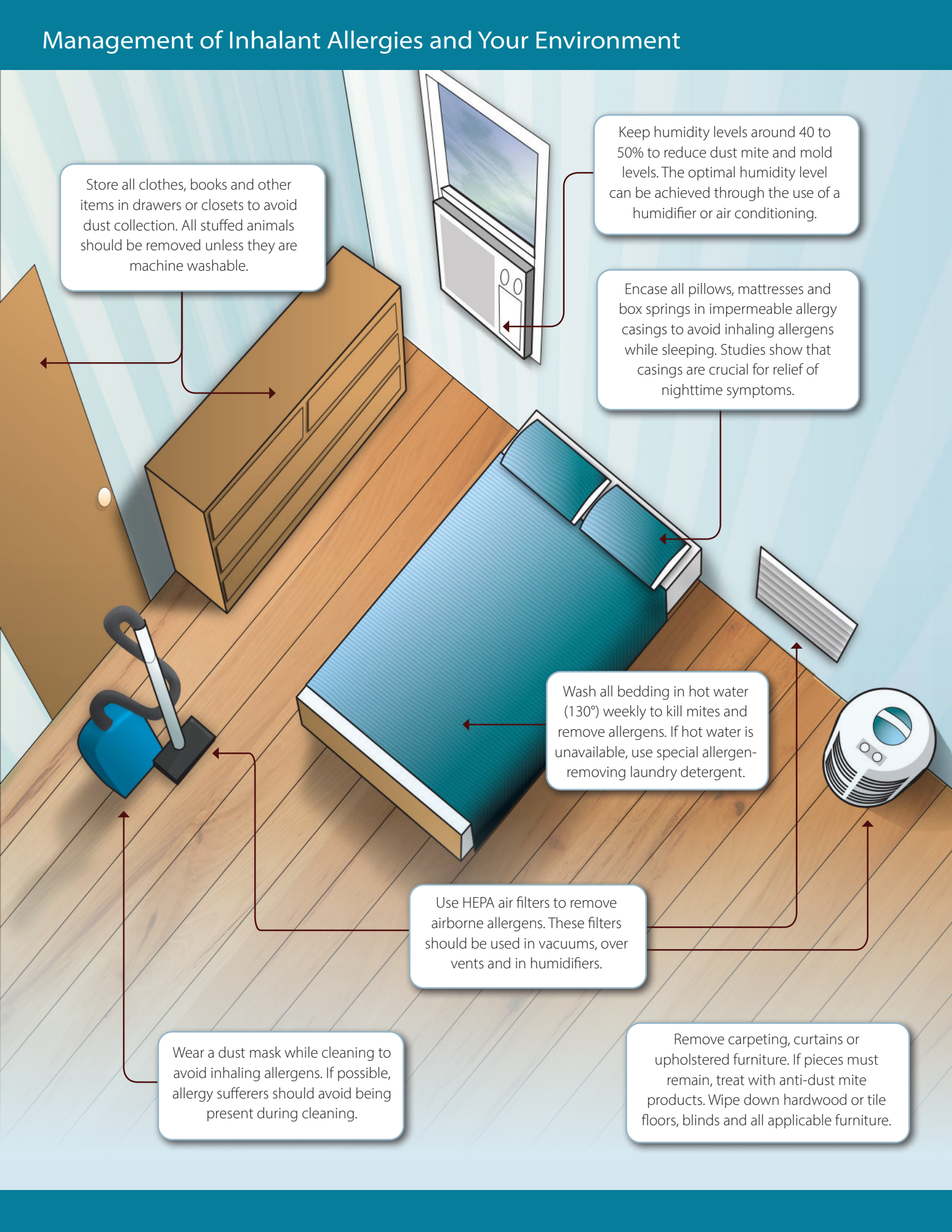
**Allergy drops:** Although allergy shots are considered the historical United States standard, oral immunotherapy possibilities exist in the form of drops and tablets. In drop therapy, the same custom variety of extracts used in injection immunotherapy are dropped under the tongue. This route is widely utilized in Europe, and the World Health Organization has endorsed them as a viable alternative. Because the FDA has not yet approved these allergy extracts for oral drop administration, they are classified as “off-label.” Insurance companies do not cover the cost of oral drops; however, the convenience of taking them at home as well as eliminating the need for office visit co-pays may make the overall out-of-pocket costs competitive. Tablet immunotherapy is a single allergen and is FDA-approved. Allergy drops/tablets can be taken in the convenience of your home because the likelihood of a severe adverse reaction is rarer than with allergy shots. Ease of oral route, eliminating the need for office visit co-pays and at-home convenience are major advantages, making it a comparable alternative.

**Non allergic rhinitis:** The majority of patients tested are allergic to something, but up to one-third of rhinitis sufferers end up with negative environmental testing results. This is called “non allergic rhinitis.” Triggers of non allergic rhinitis include certain odors, irritants, weather changes, foods, hormones, medications and other chronic health conditions. It is important to identify if you have non allergic rhinitis because your treatment plan will be completely different from those who are allergic. Even if you’re not allergic, we can help!

Subcutaneous Immunotherapy (SCIT or Allergy Shots)	Shots vs. Drops	Sublingual Immunotherapy (SLIT or Allergy Drops)
Shot, usually in upper arm.	How Taken	Drop, under the tongue.
Daily to weekly during the initial treatment phase. Biweekly or monthly as treatment progresses.	How Often	Daily.
20-minute wait after injection.	Time Commitment Post-Dose	None.
Conventional buildup can take one to four months, depending on how often you come in.	Length of Buildup	10 days.
Most Palmetto ENT & Allergy locations.	Where Received	Allergy visit for instructions, then at home.
This depends on your insurance plan. The range could be \$0-\$1200. Our benefit coordinator will review with you in detail prior to the serum being made.	Price of Serum Vial	On average, \$100 per month.
Variable, \$5-\$30	Cost of Serum Administration	Done at home. Only cost is the vial.
\$0-\$300	Cost of Epinephrine Auto-Injector	\$0-\$300
3-5 years	Total Time Commitment	3-5 years

The patient’s financial responsibility is subject to the terms of the patient’s insurance contract. Your insurance company may require a deductible, co-pay or coinsurance. It is advisable to contact your insurance provider to verify benefits.

# Management of Inhalant Allergies and Your Environment



Store all clothes, books and other items in drawers or closets to avoid dust collection. All stuffed animals should be removed unless they are machine washable.

Keep humidity levels around 40 to 50% to reduce dust mite and mold levels. The optimal humidity level can be achieved through the use of a humidifier or air conditioning.

Encase all pillows, mattresses and box springs in impermeable allergy casings to avoid inhaling allergens while sleeping. Studies show that casings are crucial for relief of nighttime symptoms.

Wash all bedding in hot water (130°) weekly to kill mites and remove allergens. If hot water is unavailable, use special allergen-removing laundry detergent.

Use HEPA air filters to remove airborne allergens. These filters should be used in vacuums, over vents and in humidifiers.

Wear a dust mask while cleaning to avoid inhaling allergens. If possible, allergy sufferers should avoid being present during cleaning.

Remove carpeting, curtains or upholstered furniture. If pieces must remain, treat with anti-dust mite products. Wipe down hardwood or tile floors, blinds and all applicable furniture.

# Your Treatment Plan

## ALLERGIC RHINITIS

Allergic rhinitis occurs when your body overreacts to allergens in the air. Symptoms include runny nose, itchy eyes, sneezing, stuffy nose and fatigue from poor sleep. Many people mistake allergic rhinitis for the common cold and overuse antibiotics as a consequence. Testing is required to determine your unique triggers so that you can begin to avoid them. Knowing your sensitivities allows your provider to personalize your medicines so as not to over- or under-medicate you. They will develop unique treatment plans that stimulate your own body's immune responses to prevent and treat your allergic diseases. Pretty cool, huh?

Did you know? Allergic rhinitis is more than just a nuisance! It can negatively affect a person's quality of life through the following:

- Decreased concentration and focus
- Limited activities
- Decreased decision-making capacity
- Impaired hand-eye coordination
- Problems remembering things
- Irritability
- Sleep disorders
- Fatigue
- Missed days of work or school
- More motor vehicle accidents
- More work or school injuries



## DID YOU KNOW? IMMUNOTHERAPY (IT) REALLY WORKS!

IT allows more symptom-free days with less medication. IT can reduce the risk of asthma in children with allergic rhinitis by as much as five times! IT can prevent the development of new allergies. IT can induce long-term remission of allergic rhinitis and asthma. IT benefits can last more than a decade after stopping treatment. IT is homeopathic because the material used is extracted from nature.

### What is IT?

IT, or Immunotherapy, is not like any other medication you've ever taken. Unlike medications that put a band-aid on allergy symptoms, immunotherapy "cures" the underlying problem by building protective immunity. After allergy testing, treatment is personalized to your specific allergic sensitivities. Doses begin very low to minimize adverse reactions and are increased in a step-wise "build up" fashion toward the most concentrated "maintenance" dose. After a period on the maintenance dose, more symptom-free days with less medication are anticipated. Three or more years of maintenance can lead to long-lasting relief for up to a decade and beyond.



## DID YOU KNOW? OVER-THE-COUNTER DOES NOT MEAN IT'S SAFE OR THE BEST CHOICE FOR YOU!

Not all medications are created equal. Oral antihistamines primarily help with itching and sneezing but, unfortunately, are not much better than no treatment at all. Nasal sprays work as well as antihistamines for itch/sneeze but are far better for stuffiness and runniness – these are best used regularly. Immunotherapy is the most effective of all, with the potential for disease prevention and long-lasting benefit even after stopping treatment. Ask your provider to decide which is best for you.







## About Palmetto ENT & Allergy



Better care in every sense. Welcome to Palmetto ENT & Allergy. We diagnose and treat all ages for the full range of ear, nose, throat, head and neck conditions.

Whether you need relief from seasonal allergies or a rare condition, our team of board-certified specialists is dedicated to treating you with the highest possible level of care.

To better serve our patients, we have created the first of its kind partnership between our allergist, immunologists and ENT doctors. This integrated approach allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the patient's health with a strategic plan for treatment. Our allergists are board-certified and specifically trained for asthma, allergic skin disorders, immune deficiency, food allergies and drug allergies. We are confident this new concept will ultimately lead to improved health outcomes for our patients and less time spent at the doctor.

With four locations across the Midlands, Palmetto ENT & Allergy is only a few steps away. No parking fees, hassles or multiple trips. Make just one call, come to your nearest office and you'll be seen promptly. Same-day appointments are even available.

**803-256-7076**

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### **ENT for Kids - Columbia**

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Columbia, SC 29223

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If you have any questions,  
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**803-256-7076.**