



Fall 2018 Newsletter

Typical fall allergens are weed pollens, with ragweed and pigweed being the most common. Ragweed typically pollinates from August through early November, with September and October being the typical peak months. This fall was also unique in that we had record setting rainfall in September. This has led to very high mold levels on a consistent basis. Most molds thrive in this damp, rainy, humid weather. Also, the grasses are still pollinating due to this heavy rain. If you are having problems with your allergies, we can review your regimen and suggest adjustments for the fall season.

Other fall triggers include respiratory viruses for asthma. Once the children go back to school, the viruses start circulating in the community. Make sure you are taking your daily preventive asthma medications to help lower your risk of asthma symptoms and attacks. We can review your asthma regimen and action plan at every visit.

Other things to remember to do in the fall is to get your flu shot. The influenza virus, aka "the flu", kills tens of thousands of people every year, and the flu shot can lower your risk of severe infections, pneumonia, hospitalizations and death from the flu.

For food allergy patients, Halloween can be a stressful time to have to avoid their food allergens. The national food allergy network, called FARE (Food Allergy Research and Education) sponsors a teal pumpkin project. This is a project to raise awareness of food allergies and promotes inclusion of all trick-or-treaters throughout the Halloween season. They encourage people provide non-food treats for trick-or-treaters and consider placing a teal pumpkin in front of your home to indicate that you have non-food treats available. See the FARE website for more information.

The fall is usually when the stinging insects can be more aggressive. If you have experienced a severe insect sting reaction to a bee, wasp, yellow jacket or fire ant, we can desensitize you with immunotherapy to these insects. This treatment is very effective, and leads to a cure for >95% of patients.

Finally, now is a good time to start preparing for mountain cedar season, which starts in December and ends in February in most of the area. We can help you prepare for the mountain cedar season and get you on a preventive regimen to make the season much better!

Allergy immunotherapy is the most effective treatment for all allergens (pollen, molds, dust mites, cat, dog) and insect allergies. People frequently wonder what types of immunotherapy exist.

1. Injection immunotherapy (aka allergy shots) have been around for over one hundred years and have decades of research demonstrating their effectiveness. With injections you come twice a week initially for 8 weeks, then weekly for a period of time, and then typically once every 2-4 weeks once the top maintenance dose is achieved. Ideal treatment duration is at least three years for best long-term results. Speak to us at your next visit or set an appointment to discuss whether you are a candidate. Insurance generally covers this treatment
2. Newer forms of immunotherapy include FDA approved allergy tablets (SLIT tablets) for ragweed, certain grass pollens and dust mites. They will be covered by some insurance plans. The first dose is given in our office, and then the remaining doses are given at home. The treatment is typically three years to five years. We can also let you know if this may be your ideal treatment option.
3. Finally, sublingual drop therapy (SLIT drops) will soon be available at our office. Though felt to be effective if dosed high enough, SLIT drops will not be covered by your insurance plan as they are not FDA approved. The benefit is that you can treat at home and there are no needles. The risks of anaphylaxis (serious allergic reaction) are lower than injection immunotherapy but in order to benefit from SLIT you have to take the drops under your tongue every day and the course is generally three years. As such, compliance or consistency with SLIT may be more difficult due to having to remember to take it daily.

We are Board Certified in Allergy and Immunology. We had to take an additional 2 years of training along with taking a comprehensive exam in Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. We spend countless hours each year staying up to date on the latest research and newest treatment options in the field. We offer highly specialized testing and treatment that is individualized to your needs. We thank you for the trust you have given to us in caring for you, your family and friends.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dennis Dilley

Dr. Christopher Calabria