

allergist

Find an allergist. Find *relief*.



FAQ for Patients on Allergists, Allergies and Asthma

Why do I need to see an allergist?

Allergies and asthma are serious diseases. Misdiagnosis and mistreatment can be dangerous, even deadly, so it's important to see an allergist who is the best trained specialist.

What can an allergist do that another health care professional cannot?

Board-certified allergists are the most qualified health care professional to perform allergy tests and treat allergic disease effectively. Allergists are specialists and:

- Treat more than just symptoms
- Can identify the source of your suffering and develop a treatment plan to eliminate symptoms
- Provide you with the most cost-effective care and best outcomes

I have seen at-home allergy testing and tests available at other doctor's offices. Why can't I just do that to find out if I have allergies?

Allergists have the training to know exactly what tests should be performed to determine the source of your suffering. Patients who do not see an

allergist may risk having test results misinterpreted which can lead to over-diagnosis and inappropriate management that can be harmful. It also may lead to over-prescription of medication and treatments, and costly and unnecessary allergen avoidance measures, including exclusion diets that may cause nutritional deficiency. For patients with asthma, misdiagnosis and mismanagement may lead to under-treatment which can be fatal.

I already know I have allergies. Why can't I just buy over-the-counter medications that will treat my condition?

There are many effective over-the-counter medications to treat different allergic diseases but an allergist can help you determine which is right for you. An allergist also can help you learn how to manage your condition and avoid exposure to allergy triggers.

My allergies and asthma really aren't that bad and I only miss a few days a work a year for them. Isn't that normal?

If properly diagnosed and treated, you should not miss any work because of allergies or asthma. You should be able to feel good, be active all day and sleep well at night. No one should accept less.

I've heard a lot of allergists recommend allergy shots. Don't those hurt and require a big time commitment?

Allergists are specialists in administering allergy shots, or immunotherapy. While the shots do require a time commitment, they don't hurt and are very safe. Allergy shots can actually alter the progression of allergies, eliminate symptoms, and prevent asthma and the development of other allergies.

It's more expensive to see a specialist. Is it really worth the cost?

Since an allergist is an expert in determining the appropriate tests and most effective treatment for your condition, you may not only feel better, but also may end up saving money. In fact, research shows that asthma patients under the care of an allergist have better outcomes at less cost because of fewer emergency care visits, fewer hospitalizations, reduced lengths of hospital stays, fewer days missed from work or school, increased productivity in their work and personal lives, greater satisfaction with their care and an improved quality of life.

How can I find more information on asthma and allergies?

Visit the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology's website, AllergyAndAsthmaRelief.org for valuable information, tools to use and resources on asthma and allergies.

