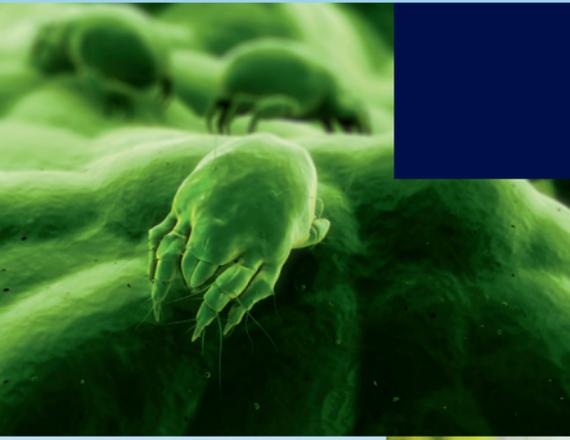


▶ Allergy guide

Specific immunotherapy (hyposensitisation)



Allowing the immune system to specifically relearn:

With an allergy the immune system reacts to a basically harmless substance that is alien to the body with an excessive defence reaction.



The objective of a specific immunotherapy is to step down the defence reaction to a normal measure. Step by step the

immune system learns to deal with the assumed „dangerous“ allergen and the body can get used to the allergy-triggering substance.

In the ideal case after completion of the treatment it reacts to pollen, household dust mites or other allergens with the same non-sensitivity as with people who do not have allergies.



This speaks in favour of a specific immunotherapy (SIT)

- ▶ SIT is the only causal and effective treatment against allergies.
- ▶ You can expect permanent healing or at least a significant alleviation of the symptoms.
- ▶ You no longer need to take so many medicinal products to alleviate the complaints.
- ▶ You can prevent a deterioration of the disease (change of level), e.g. the development from hay fever to allergic asthma can be prevented.



Here patience is necessary!

A specific immunotherapy is a long-term measure over at least 3 years. Your allergologist will inform you about the exact course of the treatment.

Prerequisite for a successful therapy

- ▶ Presence of an allergic cause for your complaints after comprehensive diagnostics through your allergologist
- ▶ Availability of a suitable preparation with the triggering allergens
- ▶ And finally: **your cooperation** and your staying power for the at least 3-year therapy

Examples of allergies that can be treated with an SIT:

- ▶ Pollen
- ▶ Household mites
- ▶ Animal hairs
- ▶ Moulds
- ▶ Insect toxins



At present no specific immunotherapy is available for the treatment of a food allergy. But with many people suffering from pollen allergies who over the course of the disease developed a cross

allergy towards certain foods an improvement of these allergic reactions was also observed over the course of the treatment.

Specific immunotherapy for children

Especially with children several reasons speak in favour of the treatment:

- ▶ The disease has often not yet led to deep changes of the organs.
- ▶ Through the treatment the risk for a change of level (deterioration of the disease) is significantly reduced.
- ▶ A possible increase of allergies towards other substances (development of new allergies) may be reduced.

Our tip for you:

Use your preparation every day at the same time, e.g. shortly after brushing your teeth. This helps you to not forget the application.



The consultation comes before the therapy

Before you decide for one or the other form of therapy it is necessary to clarify several questions with your allergologist.

- ▶ Are the therapy allergens necessary for you available in the desired pharmaceutical form?
- ▶ Is your allergy able to be better treated with a SCIT or a SLIT?
- ▶ Are there any previous diseases that speak against a specific immunotherapy, e.g. a permanent restriction of the lung function?

Which undesirable accompanying reactions can occur?

Within the scope of a specific immunotherapy redness, swelling or itching can occur at the site of the injection. More rare are disturbances of the general well-being such as fatigue or headache. Other reactions may also occur such as respiratory distress, cardiovascular reactions, wheals or eczema.

Good to know

- ▶ An SIT is only possible if it is known which substance that is alien to the body triggers the allergy with you.
- ▶ An SIT can even be performed if you react to several allergens. In this case your allergologist will decide how to proceed with the therapy.
- ▶ The earlier you decide to undergo a therapy the higher are the chances that your allergy will be completely healed.
- ▶ One is never too old for a specific immunotherapy. The therapy can be started independent from the age.

Tips for the treatment

- ▶ Even if the complaints subside, definitely do attend the other appointments because only after completion of the treatment can permanent success be expected.
- ▶ With a subcutaneous immunotherapy take enough rest on the day of the injection and avoid strenuous physical work, intensive sport and visits to the sauna.
- ▶ A hyposensitisation must not be initiated during pregnancy. If however you become pregnant during a currently underway specific immunotherapy, then this is not a reason to interrupt the treatment.



Combating like with like by different means

With a specific immunotherapy tiny amounts of the allergen may be injected below the skin or swallowed.

SCIT gets under the skin

With the subcutaneous immunotherapy (in short SCIT) the allergens are applied under the skin by means of a fine needle. Usually at the beginning of the therapy on a weekly basis you are given very small allergen amounts in the upper arm. Over the later course of the treatment it is sufficient to have an appointment every 4 to 6 weeks. There is however also the so-called short-term immunotherapy. Here a few injections are given every year up until the start of the pollen flight season.



Our tip for you:

When planning your appointments take into account that after application of the injection you must stay at the practice for at least half an hour.

Open your mouth with the SLIT

With the sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT) drops, respectively tablets with a substance containing allergens are deposited under the tongue. The substance must be „held“ under the tongue for approximately 2 – 3 minutes before it may be swallowed. It is important that the application is performed daily and with a high level of reliability.



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