

PROVEN ALLERGY MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL



CAN MY PET BE ALLERGIC, JUST LIKE ME?

Allergy is the name used to describe an array of symptoms such as sneezing, runny noses or skin rashes felt by some individuals in response to sensitizing substances in environment. Animals, just like people, can suffer allergic reactions to a wide variety of environmental substances, or allergens. Some allergens are seasonal, such as grass, tree or weed pollens. Other allergens cause year-round symptoms, and include foods, mold spores, dust mites, insects and other materials found in the home environment.

Genetic predisposition is an important component in developing allergy, in both humans and animals. The genetic factors

determining susceptibility are complex, but it is known that certain breeds are more prone to allergies than others.

WHAT ARE COMMON ALLERGIC SYMPTOMS IN PETS?

The target organ for allergy in dogs is the skin, so the most common symptom seen in purities or intense itching. Affected animals exhibit swollen, reddened, itchy ears due to inflammation, excessive licking and chewing, face rubbing and scratching, leading to hair loss, skin rashes, and secondary skin infections. Cats with allergies excessively groom themselves, causing hair loss. Cats also experience runny noses, watery eyes and asthma-like symptoms, much like people.

COULD MY PETS BE ALLERGIC TO FOODS?

Absolutely! As a matter of fact, food allergy is the most likely cause of allergic symptoms in animals less than 1 year of age. Food allergy commonly causes ear inflammation, excessive feet licking, generalized itching and other skin problems. Food allergy in animals also causes more typical

gastrointestinal symptoms, among them gastritis, vomiting and diarrhea.

HOW CAN MY PET'S ALLERGIES BE DIAGNOSED?

It's very simple. Your veterinarian will discuss your pet's clinical history and environment surrounding with you. After excluding other possible cause for your pet's symptoms, he or she may prescribe a simple blood test from **Bio-Medical Services**. Our Pet ELISA is an accurate, reliable test for allergies, one that offers many advantages for pets and owners alike. The Pet ELISA blood test can even be done on pets being treated with antihistamine or steroids.

Your veterinarian will draw a small amount of blood from your pet and send it to the **Bio-Medical Services** laboratory. Your pet's serum will be tested for sensitivity to a panel of grass, tree and weed allergens specific of your geographical area, as well as to other important allergens such as dust mites, molds or cat dander.

The Pet ELISA can also identify your pet's sensitivities to specific foods. Avoidance of the offending food is the only therapeutic option available for the treatment of food

allergy. **Bio-Medical Services** will send your veterinarian a computerized listing of commercial foods acceptable for you pet. Over the years, we've documented dramatic improvement in thousands of dogs and cats will food allergy, simply through targeted changes in diet.

WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS FOR TREATING MY PET'S ALLERGIES?

Avoidance of sensitizing allergens is preferred, but this is often difficult if not impossible. Steroid drugs and antihistamines offer short-term relief, but prolonged use of these drugs is not advisable, and may even be harmful to your pet. Immunotherapy (also know as hypo sensitization, desensitization or allergy injections) is the only proven, safe and effective method available for the treatment of allergies.

HOW DOES IMMUNOTHERAPY WORK?

Based on the results of the Pet ELISA blood test, your veterinarian asks **Bio-Medical Services** to formulate a mixture of allergens specifically designed to treat your pet's allergies. The goal of immunotherapy is to introduce gradually increasing amounts of sensitizing allergens to your pet over time. As your pet becomes less sensitive to

environmental allergens, his allergy symptoms improve, often dramatically.

HOW SAFE AND EFFECTIVE IS IMMUNOTHERAPY TREATMENT?

Studies have documented success in more than 70% of the animals tested, evidence by marked improvement of allergy symptoms accompanied by reduction or elimination of the need for steroids or antihistamines.

Success depends upon the precision of diagnosis and is highly dependent upon adherence to a prescribed course of treatment. Most side effects if immunotherapy are localized, mild reactions easily treated with antihistamines.

Sometimes a small adjustment to the injection protocol is required. Systemic adverse reactions are extremely rare.

WHEN WILL MY PET'S SYMPTOMS IMPROVE?

Every allergic animal's response to immunotherapy is unique, and pets show progress at different rates. Some animal exhibit immediate, dramatic improvement in allergy symptoms, shortly after immunotherapy begins. For others, 6-8 months is required before significant improvement occurs. It is also known that symptoms can return if allergy injections are

stopped. Allergies are rarely, if ever, cured. The need for allergy injections may continue throughout your pet's life.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I DON'T TREAT MY PET'S ALLERGIES?

Allergies that go untreated worsen over time, as IgE antibody levels rise in the blood, in response to your pet's continued exposure to environment or other allergens. Animals with itchy skin will lick, chew and scratch themselves excessively, causing localized, mild skin rashes to deteriorate, often leading to secondary bacterial or yeast infections.

Left untreated, your pet's symptoms will continue to get worsen as your pet ages.