

STUDENT HEALTH & WELLNESS

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA * STUDENT HEALTH & WELLNESS * 4189 Westlawn * Iowa City, IA 52242-1100

Fax: (319) 384-1703 ** Allergy appointments, (319) 335-8394 ** Allergy nurse questions, (319) 335-8365

<http://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/services/allergies>



INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALLERGY (IMMUNOTHERAPY) PATIENTS

Student Health & Wellness (SHW) administers allergy shots/immunotherapy as a service to our students. We do not have an “Allergist” on-staff so all allergy testing, mixing of extract(s), immunotherapy education and instruction, and the very first shot(s) from your extract(s) MUST be done by your local allergist. SHW will store your extract(s) in our temperature-monitored refrigerator, administer your allergy shots under a physician’s supervision, and provide emergency treatment in case of a reaction to your allergy shots.

You will need to visit with a SHW physician prior to receiving your allergy shots at SHW. The physician will review your medical history, allergies, current medication and your allergist’s plan of care. The Physician Information Letter on the SHW web site should be completed by your allergist and either faxed to SHW prior to your appointment, or bring the completed form with you to your appointment. The appointment with the physician can be scheduled any time before your allergy shot(s) are due, or you can schedule an appointment with the physician followed by an appointment in the allergy shot clinic. A consent to receive allergy injections at SHW will need to be signed by you at the first visit. You will also need to sign forms so that SHW may obtain and/or release information to your allergist.

EPI PEN REQUIREMENT: SHW REQUIRES THAT YOU HAVE AN “EPI-PEN” AND CARRY IT ON THE DAY YOU RECEIVE ALLERGY INJECTIONS. If you do not already have an epi-pen, the physician will provide you with a prescription. Students who do not have their epi-pen with them will either need to reschedule later that day or another day.

Fees: There is a fee for each allergy visit. The allergy extract administration fee may be billed to your health insurance, charged to your U-Bill, or paid in cash. If you have questions about whether charges at SHW will be covered by your insurance, contact your insurance company directly at their toll-free number. There is usually a 1-800 number on the back of your card. You can read more about this on the SHW website.

Allergy Clinic Hours

Allergy Clinic Hours - by appointment only: Monday through Friday: 8:15-11:00 a.m., 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Occasionally the Allergy Clinic will be closed for a day or a half day due to staffing or other reasons, but reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate students who need their allergy shot(s) due to time factors or need to pick up/drop off their extracts.

Appointment Procedure

1. Call (319) 335-8394 Monday through Friday during the hours of 8:00-5:00 or stop by the “Reception” desk to set-up your allergy injection appointments.
2. You may schedule appointments for the entire semester or one at time (according to your preference).
3. Please allow 45 minutes for each appointment. Medications, drug allergies and questions on health status will be reviewed at each visit.
4. Please stop at Reception to check-in before every appointment. You will need to verify demographic and insurance information at each visit.
5. **All patients are required to wait at SHW a minimum of 30 minutes** after injections and to check out with the allergy nurse before leaving the clinic. The nurse will inspect the injection site(s) and record any local reaction. If you have a history of adverse reactions, you may be asked to wait longer.
6. Arrange allergy shot appointments to avoid strenuous activity and the use of alcohol just before and for 2 hours following an injection. Physical activity, which causes increased blood circulation, may result in rapid allergy antigen absorption and possibly produce a reaction.
7. Do not interrupt your allergy shot schedule for a minor illness, mild upper respiratory symptoms, or use of anti-allergic medications. If you are feeling ill on the day of your allergy visit, please inform the allergy nurse. If you have any questions about whether you can receive your injection, call the allergy nurse at 319-335-8365 or Nurse Line at 319-335-9704 to discuss your concerns.

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CONTACTING YOUR ALLERGIST:

As part of your immunotherapy, we may need to contact your allergist to clarify or adjust dosages, or to request additional information. If a new order is needed, we require these orders be signed by your allergist and faxed to SHW or we must speak with the allergist directly on the telephone. We **CANNOT** receive telephone orders from the nurse or office staff. In some cases, this may cause an additional delay in receiving your allergy shots.

STUDENTS WHO MISS APPOINTMENTS:

If you are unable to keep an appointment, please call as far in advance as possible. If you do not call by 8:00 a.m. on the day of your appointment, you will be assessed a \$15.00 charge. Call (319) 335-8394 anytime to cancel. If you reach voice mail, please leave a message. The date and time are automatically recorded with the message.

ALLERGY SHOT REACTIONS

Some reaction (itching, redness, and swelling) at the injection site is common. Please see our educational handout entitled, *Information about Possible Reactions following Allergy Shots* for descriptions of reaction symptoms and treatment. Make sure to report any reaction to the allergy nurse. The nurse will follow your physician's guidelines for dosage adjustments.

IF YOU EXPERIENCE A SEVERE (SYSTEMIC) REACTION:

- **USE YOUR EPI-PEN**
- **GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM OR CALL 911 FOR AN AMBULANCE WHEN ON OR OFF CAMPUS.**
- **ANY STUDENT WHO HAS A SYSTEMIC REACTION WHILE AT STUDENT HEALTH & WELLNESS AND RECEIVES EPINEPHRINE WILL BE REFERRED TO GO TO THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA HOSPITALS AND CLINICS EMERGENCY TREATMENT CENTER FOR FURTHER OBSERVATION.**
- **WE WILL CONTINUE WITH IMMUNOTHERAPY ONLY AFTER CONSULTATION WITH YOUR ALLERGIST (OR UIHC ALLERGIST) AND APPROVAL FROM THE SHW DESIGNATED ALLERGY PHYSICIAN OR THEIR DESIGNEE**

BETA BLOCKERS:

You should not take "beta-blocker" medications while receiving immunotherapy. (*Beta-blockers are used in the management of cardiovascular disorders such as hypertension, angina pectoris, cardiac arrhythmias, myocardial infarction, and heart failure. They are also prescribed to control symptoms of sympathetic over-activity during alcohol withdrawal, anxiety states, hyperthyroidism, and tremor; for the prophylaxis of migraine headaches; and bleeding associated with portal hypertension. Some beta-blockers are prescribed as eye drops to reduce intra-ocular pressure in glaucoma and ocular hypertension.*) Please talk with the SHW nurse or provider if you are unsure if any of your medications are considered a "beta-blocker". Common betablockers are propranolol, Atenolol, Inderal, Labetolol, Lopressor, Metoprolol among others.

BREAKS/SUMMER VACATION

If your schedule requires an injection during a period of time when you are away from campus, the following instructions apply:

1. Notify an allergy nurse that you will be away from campus so that you may pick up your allergy extract(s) and instructions. Make plans to keep the extract refrigerated. Do not freeze extracts.
2. When you return to campus, bring your refrigerated extract and updated instructions. This should include injection dates, dosage given, and signature of the physician or nurse who administered the injections.

Disclaimer

Student Health & Wellness reserves the right to decline to administer allergy shots to any student who has a perceived higher than average risk for a severe/systemic reaction to immunotherapy or who does not abide by SHW instructions/requirements for receiving immunotherapy. Reasons for declination could include, but are not limited to chronic lateness for injections, refusing to remain at Student Health & Wellness for 30 minutes following allergy shots, and leaving SHW during the 30 minute wait.

The success and effectiveness of your immunotherapy program depends on YOU adhering to your allergist's recommended schedule as much as possible.

SHW strongly recommends all students receiving allergy immunotherapy obtain an influenza vaccination every year.