



## WHAT IS ORAL IMMUNOTHERAPY? (PEANUT)

Oral Immunotherapy is a process of administering gradually increasing doses of a food allergen (a commercially manufactured powder mixed with a harmless food) to allergic individuals until the patient becomes desensitized to it in order to provide protection against the symptoms that food allergies cause.

### ***What is the time course of oral immunotherapy?***

One of the goals of allergen immunotherapy is to slowly introduce the diluted food allergen initially on a weekly basis while building up to a maintenance dose over 4-5 months.

#### ➤ **Pre-Qualifying Visit**

The initial visit is the Pre-Qualifying Visit. This visit will consist of a consultation with the physician, review of medical history, pulmonary function testing, and allergy testing or laboratory work if ordered by physician. Once these results are back, the doctor will determine whether the patient is qualified for immunotherapy. If qualified, the First Dosing Visit will be scheduled.

#### ➤ **First Dosing Visit**

The First Dosing Visit will take about 3-4 hours with doses given every 20 minutes, gradually increasing throughout the day. The patient will take the last tolerated dose daily at home until they return to clinic for a Dose Increase Visit in 7-14 days.

#### ➤ **Dose Increase Phase**

Dose Increase Visits last approximately 1 hour. Dose Increase Visits are scheduled every 7-14 days. If there are no problems during the Dose Increase Phase, the patient will be eating some portion of the allergenic food in 2-3 months, and a full serving of the allergenic food in 4-5 months.

#### ➤ **Maintenance Phase**

After passing an oral challenge at the end of the escalation phase, the patient will begin the maintenance phase with daily home dosing. There will be a follow-up doctors visit at 1 month (with lab for food specific IgE) and then follow up visits scheduled every 6 months. Repeat food specific IgE lab will be drawn yearly on maintenance dosing.

### ***What are the adverse side effects?***

Oral Immunotherapy introduces amounts of the allergen that individual patients are allergic to, so there is always the potential for side effects. The doses are increased gradually in clinic and NEVER increased at home to reduce the potential for side effects. Precaution instructions are also given to minimize the risk of reactions. Reactions can range from mild itching in the mouth, hives, runny/itchy nose, mild nausea/discomfort to more severe symptoms such as shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing, swelling of lips/tongue, inflammation or swelling of the esophagus, whole body hives, vomiting, diarrhea, and anxiety. Epinephrine auto-injectors are to be carried with the patient at all times.

### ***What are the goals of allergen immunotherapy?***

Our number one goal for you as our patient is safety. Your physician can discuss with you the benefits and potential complications of oral immunotherapy as this is dependent upon the patient's own allergy profile. The ideal outcome of oral immunotherapy is for the patient to tolerate a full serving of the allergenic food daily through desensitization.