

ALLERGY TESTING & HYPOSENSITIZATION

A simple blood test has been developed which allows us to test your pet for various substances causing your pet's allergic reactions. The blood sample will be tested for sensitivity to grasses, trees, molds, hair, feathers, fleas, and numerous other known causes of allergy.

If your pet is found to be allergic to any or all of these factors, a special "vaccine" can be prepared. This vaccine is given by injections attempting to desensitize your pet to those things known to be causing a problem. Three out of four pets are significantly helped by these injections.

This may either totally eliminate the allergic signs that are present, or at least decrease those signs to a level more tolerable to your pet. This usually greatly **REDUCES** the need for steroid-type medications used to control the signs. These drugs, when used at high levels for extended periods of time, can certainly have detrimental long-term effects on your pet's health and life span.

The basic principle of desensitization (hyposensitization) is to inject small amounts of the substances known to cause the allergic signs in increasing concentrations and at regular intervals in an effort to induce a tolerance of these substances by the pet's body.

Avoidance of offending allergens is often impractical, if not impossible. Prolonged medication with steroids and/or antihistamines may become either ineffective or detrimental to the pet. Therefore hyposensitization represents a treatment option that should be explored, especially for a young pet or one that has a prolonged seasonal involvement.

Although hyposensitization does NOT provide a cure for allergy, it does produce improvement in 75% of the pets treated.

Over a period of weeks the dosage is gradually increased, but the frequency of injection is decreased.

The initial treatment program for those pets whose test shows a good possibility of successful therapy an initial treatment consists of a 3 vial set which is sufficient for about nine months. If the pet has shown improvement during the first three month series, it is imperative that the maintenance program be continued faithfully. We do not recommend continuing therapy if the initial nine month treatment does not yield significant results.

REMEMBER-- the hyposensitization procedure will NOT cure your pet.

Occasional allergy treatment may be required when acute flare-ups occur. The goal of hyposensitization is to decrease this number of acute attacks to the minimum possible.

Hyposensitization for food allergy is not highly successful and therefore not recommended.

You will be given special instructions and taught to properly give the injections. It is very simple - very similar to the procedure followed by humans with diabetes. The needle used for injection is very small and usually not even felt by the pet.