



**School of Veterinary Medicine
Dermatology Service**

ALLERGY TESTING FOR PETS

If our specialists confirm that your pet has atopic dermatitis (environmental allergies) due to pollen, molds, dust mites etc, allergy testing can be done to identify exactly which of those cause the problem. This allows to treat the cause by performing immunotherapy (allergy shots or drops), which is designed specifically for your pet based on the testing results.

How is allergy testing done?

Allergy testing is done with a blood test or skin testing (intradermal testing). Both tests are great but as you know no test is perfect, therefore we try to perform both tests for our patients, to get the most information we can. Both methods test for allergy to tree, grass and weed pollen, dust mites, molds, yeasts, and others.

- Blood test*: We draw a small amount of blood and send it to a laboratory. The results are back usually in 2 weeks.
- Skin test: Your pet will be mildly sedated. We clip the hair from one side of the chest. There we will inject small amounts of allergens into the skin. Then by observing the skin's reaction (hives), we can determine the substances to which an animal may be allergic.

** Please note, that there are available blood tests for food allergy, but those are not reliable! We recommend only blood tests for environmental allergens. If you are interested in learning more about food allergy you can read our Food and Allergy handout.*

Before the allergy testing appointment:

Please do not feed your pet on the day of the testing (no breakfast). The last meal should be at 8-10pm the night before the test. Access to water should be unlimited.

Some medications can interfere with the testing. Here is a list of medication that must be stopped before the testing. If your pet is on another medication not listed here please call the Dermatology Service.



**School of Veterinary Medicine
Dermatology Service**

- Antihistamines (i.e. Benadryl, cetirizine, Zyrtec, Atarax, allegra, hydroxyzine, etc): Stop them 7 days before the testing.
- Oral steroids (i.e. prednisone, prednisolone, Tamaril-P, etc): Stop them 30 days before the testing.
- Short-acting steroid injections (dexamethasone): Testing must be done 30 days after the last injection.
- Long-acting steroid injections (Depo-Medrol/methylprednisolone acetate): Testing must be done 8 weeks after the last injection.
- Apoquel: if allergy testing is scheduled within 30 days after the start of treatment, no withdrawal period is required. If your pet takes Apoquel longer than a month then it must be stopped 3-5 days prior to testing.
- Cyclosporine: if allergy testing is scheduled within 30 days after the start of treatment, no withdrawal period is required. If your pet takes Cyclosporine longer than a month then it must be stopped 1 week prior to testing.
- Topical antimicrobials – no steroid (shampoo, mousse, spray): Stop them 48 hours before the testing.
- Topical steroids (Genesis/triamcinolone spray): Stop them 14 days before the
- Topical ear medications that contain a steroid (i.e. dexamethasone, Mometasone): Stop 14 days before testing.

Those medications are allowed to be given:

- Cytopoint (lokivetmab), flea/tick/heartworm preventatives, antibiotics, seizure medications, thyroid pills.