

## Office Policies

### STAFF AFFILIATION

- CHRIST HOSPITAL, Oak Lawn
- PALOS COMMUNITY HOSPITAL, Palos Heights

You can be seen for an allergy related illness during office hours at any office. Patients who have a fever (more than 100° F) or other symptoms of acute infection or any difficulty in breathing are advised not to take allergy injections. However, do inform Dr. Gavani of your condition as she may want to examine you. It is permissible to have your injection while finishing up an antibiotic. Illness not related to allergies, such as injuries, physicals, and surgical problems should be treated by the family physician / pediatrician / internist. If you have not seen Dr. Gavani for an extended period of time, an office exam may be required before prescriptions can be filled.

### TELEPHONE CALLS

Dr. Gavani can be reached for medical emergencies either through the office or the answering service at 708-636-9611. If, after leaving your name and number, your call has not been returned in a reasonable period of time, do call again. Our receptionist will be in the office by 9:30 a.m., Monday through Friday. When calling, please specify if you are:

1. Having difficulty in breathing
2. Requesting medication refill
3. Reporting progression of your recent illness
4. Needing an appointment

*Always call the same number: 708-636-9611 (all offices)*

### DOCTOR'S VACATION

When the doctor is on vacation, desensitization injections are given under the supervision of another M.D. present at the office. For an allergy related illness, please call your family physician or pediatrician. If you or your physician prefer to be seen by an allergist, please call our office. We will refer you to the allergist who is on back up call.

### OFFICE HOURS

Appointments are given for new patient consultations, allergy testing and for sick patients on scheduled time.

### DESENSITIZATION INJECTIONS

If you are on a desensitization program (allergy injections) you should come at your convenience, but only during regular shot hours at that particular office.

### SHOT HOURS

<b>Monday</b>	4400 W. 95th Street, Oak Lawn	<b>2:30 pm – 7:00 pm</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	7600 W. College Dr., Palos Heights	<b>11:00 am – 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	7600 W. College Dr., Palos Heights	<b>3:00 pm – 7:00 pm</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	4400 W. 95th Street, Oak Lawn	<b>2:30 pm – 7:00 pm</b>
<b>Friday</b>	1890 Silver Cross Blvd., New Lenox	<b>1:00 pm – 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	7600 W. College Dr., Palos Heights	<b>8:30 am – 12:30 pm</b>

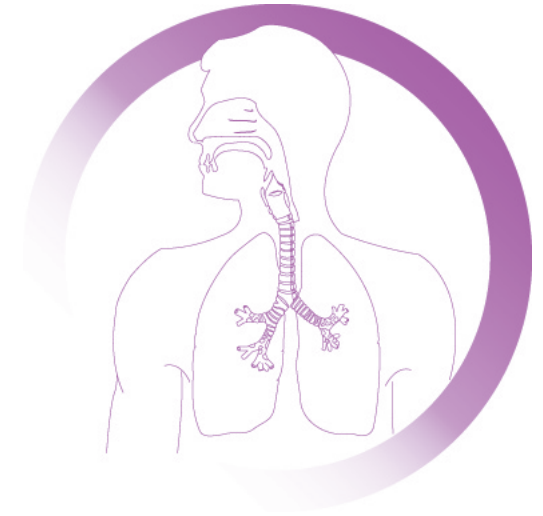
## What is an Allergy?

Allergy is an abnormal reaction to substances that are ordinarily harmless. These may be taken into the body by being swallowed, inhaled, ingested or contact with the skin. Such sensitizing substances are called "allergens". Some of the common allergens include: pollen, mold spores, house dust, animal danders (shed by dogs, cats, horses, rabbits, etc...), feathers, kapok, industrial chemicals, foods, certain drugs and insect stings.

Allergic diseases or reactions may involve any parts or system of the body. The most frequently involved are the respiratory system resulting in hay fever, rhinitis and asthma; and the skin which develops allergic dermatitis or contact dermatitis (poison ivy, urticaria). The sensitivity may not be present at first contact with the allergen, but may develop after repeated exposure. For example, a new cat may not cause allergy until it has been living in the household for many months, and the susceptible patient becomes sensitized and develops a stuffy nose and sneezing or wheezing on further contact with the cat.

Anyone may acquire allergy, but those who have allergy in the family are more likely to become allergic. A recent survey showed that 35 million people suffer from allergies and about nine million of these have asthma. Allergy may develop at any age. Even though children are more apt to develop allergies, persons in middle life may experience their first attacks of allergy.

An allergist can discover the causes of your allergy by taking a through history of your symptoms, obtaining the family history of and the environments at home and work, along with a complete physical examination and skin testing with appropriate extracts of common allergens. early investigation of allergies, removal of offending allergens, timely and correct use of drugs for symptomatic relief of allergic diseases and improvement in the techniques of desensitization have all led to a high success rate in the treatment of allergic diseases.



UMA D. GAVANI, M.D.

Diplomat of American Board of Allergy and Immunology

## Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

for Adults and Children

**708-636-9611**

4400 West 95th Street, Suite 406  
Oak Lawn, IL 60453  
Fax 708-636-6577

7600 West College Drive  
Palos Heights, IL 60463  
Fax 708-361-8698

1890 Silver Cross Boulevard  
Pavillion A, Suite 560  
New Lenox, IL 60452  
Fax 815-717-8748

## Allergic Diseases

### ASTHMA

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Asthma is a condition characterized by coughing, wheezing and difficulty in breathing. It may occur in acute attacks which may last from several minutes to days or it may resist more or less all the time. Asthmatic symptoms are caused by a spasm or tightening of the muscle fibers around the bronchial tubes, and the production of the sticky mucus causing interference with air flow. Any of the previously mentioned allergens may precipitate asthmatic factors such as air pollutants, cigarette smoke, fumes, infections, etc... and at times by emotional factors. Asthma tends to recur and become chronic unless immediate and continuous attention is given.

### ALLERGIC DERMATITIS OR ECZEMA

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Allergic Dermatitis or Eczema is a noncontagious, itchy, scaly rash which is often chronic and occurs in the creases of the arms, legs and neck, although it can cover the entire body. This condition is frequently associated with allergies and foods may be contributing factors.

### ALLERGIC RHINITIS

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Allergic Rhinitis is a term generally applied to nasal congestion, sneezing and runny nose due to allergies. This may be a seasonal problem often called 'hay fever'; caused by ragweed pollen or may be a year-round problem caused by other allergens such as house dust, molds, animal dander and feathers. Patients with constant nasal symptoms should have an allergy evaluation.

### CONTACT DERMATITIS

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Contact Dermatitis is a skin rash which comes from direct skin contact with substances, animals, plant, chemicals or minerals. The most common cause of contact dermatitis is poison ivy.

### STINGING INSECTS

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Stinging insects such as honey bees, wasps, yellow jackets, yellow hornets and white faced hornets can cause allergic reactions which, when severe, can be life threatening. Patients with such reactions should carry an "Emergency Kit" containing adrenaline. Also these patients can be safely tested and treated with appropriate venoms.

### URTICARIA OR HIVES

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Urticaria or Hives is an outbreak on the skin of itchy welts of varying size. When the swellings are large and deeper they may be called angioderma. Allergy to food or drugs such as penicillin and aspirin are well known causes of these conditions. But, they may also result from an underlying disease.

### FOOD ALLERGIES

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Food Allergies can cause symptoms such as hives, swelling, rashes, abdominal cramps, diarrhea and rarely other less defined symptoms such as hyperactivity and fatigue.

## Environmental Control Instructions

### To reduce allergens and irritants in your home, follow these instructions:

#### GENERAL

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- Clean your bedroom from ceiling to floor, including furniture and curtains.
- The room should contain a minimum of furniture and other dust-collecting objects so that it can be cleaned thoroughly once a week.
- Remove the bedroom carpet, if possible or vacuum frequently if carpet cannot be removed.
- Encase both mattress and box springs in covers and wash the cover bedding in hot water. Wipe mattress top weekly with a damp cloth before you put on clean sheets.
- The bed clothing should consist of washable blankets, quilts and spreads. Such coverings should be washed weekly in hot water.
- Only a washable cotton rug should be in the room. Drapes or shades should also be washable.
- Strip the bedroom and closets of non-essentials, leaving only the clothing worn at the present time.
- Remove all woolen blankets, and all comforters stuffed with feathers or kapok. Get new dacron-filled pillows. Wash blankets and pillows every 6-8 weeks.
- Remove the mattress pad or use only a non-allergenic pad.
- Toys, books and ornaments in the room should be kept to a minimum. Allergic children should play with wooden, metal or rubber toys. Stuffed toys should be washed weekly in hot water.
- The bedroom door should be kept closed when the room is not in use.
- Use electric air purifier in bedroom.
- Use no scented items in the bathroom, including aerosols, bubble bath, scented facial or toilet tissue, powders, deodorants, hair spray and after shave lotion.
- Vacuum all furniture often and well.
- Change the furnace filter at least once a month. Cover bedroom and family room air registers with coarse cheesecloth. Duct work may need cleaning if it is very dirty.

#### PETS

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- Strongly advise not having pets in the household.
- If pets cannot be removed, recommend washing 1-2 times weekly.
- Using electronic air purifier in the bedroom would help to decrease the animal dander.

#### MOLD ALLERGIER

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- Avoid graneries, decaying vegetation.
- Cool, damp areas are conducive to mold growth. Dehumidifiers during summer are sometimes necessary, more so in older basements.
- Remove moldy wallpaper, carpeting and any other moldy items.
- Install a dehumidifier in basement if humidity maintains above 60%.
- Use a fungicide, such as ammonia or Impregon (Fleming and Co – can be ordered by druggist's), in laundry, as a household spray cleaner, and in paint.
- Seal basement cracks with rubber silicone sealer.
- Avoid excessive use of room vaporizers and humidifiers. If you use one, be sure to keep it properly cleaned.
- Showers of mold may occur before storms or after frosts on windy days.
- Keep an ideal humidity level at 40 - 50%.

#### MITES

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- Encase all bedding and wash the covers and sheets weekly in hot water.
- If a carpet can not be removed, use 3% tanic acid on the carpet every 6 months.
- Maintain low humidity in summertime by using air conditioning.

#### POLLENS

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- Sleep with the windows closed.
- Stay indoors on warm windy, dry days as pollen counts can be higher.
- Avoid members of ragweed family plants like Chrysanthemums, Daisys, Dandelions, Sunflowers, Marigolds and Goldenrods.
- Shower after grass cutting and try not to empty bags of grass cuttings.

#### FEATHERS

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- There should be no feather or down pillows or comforters in bedroom.