

2020

BEST PRACTICES MANUAL



Canine, Feline & Equine Allergies

Important Information about Allergy Testing & Treatment with Spectrum Veterinary

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WHAT'S THE VALUE OF PROVIDING ALLERGY TESTING AND TREATMENT IN YOUR PRACTICE?

Top 10 Reasons Pets Visit Vets

[According to VPI \(Veterinary Pet Insurance\)](#)

Top 10 Canine Claims	Top 10 Feline Claims
1. Skin allergies	1. Bladder/urinary tract problems
2. Ear infections	2. Periodontitis/Dental disease
3. Non-cancerous skin mass	3. Chronic kidney disease
4. Skin infection	4. Excessive thyroid hormone
5. Arthritis	5. Vomiting, Upset stomach
6. Vomiting, Upset stomach	6. Diabetes
7. Intestinal inflammation/diarrhea	7. Diarrhea/Intestinal upset
8. Periodontitis/Dental disease	8. Lymphoma
9. Bladder/urinary tract problems	9. Upper respiratory virus
10. Soft tissue trauma (bruise or contusion)	10. Skin allergies

For Dogs:

Allergies not only top the list but can be responsible/account for up to 4 of these causes above (ear infections, skin infections, vomiting, diarrhea).

For Cats:

Allergies are not as great of an issue in the feline world, but they are still an issue nonetheless. Allergies can also account for, or be linked to, 4 other issues common in cats and visits to the vet (thyroid, vomiting, diarrhea, and upper respiratory issues).

Allergy testing with Spectrum Veterinary does not mean you will never refer to a veterinary dermatologist again, but it does allow you to keep about 80% of your dermatology cases in house.

WHAT TO ADDRESS/RULE OUT BEFORE ALLERGY TESTING

Before conducting allergy testing we want to complete a full dermatological work up to address one or more of the following:

- Infections: Scabies, Parasite, Malassezia, Yeast & Bacterial
- Endocrinology disease (Cortisol test)
- Thyroid disease (T4/T5 test).

WHAT & WHEN IS TESTING APPROPRIATE?

- Patient is 2 years of age or older
- 3 primary features are present:
 - Pruritus
 - Facial and/or digital involvement
 - Hardening/crusting of sores
 - Chronically-relapsing dermatitis
 - Individual or family history
 - Breed predisposition
- 3 secondary features are present:
 - Onset of signs before 3 years of age
 - Generalized dry skin
 - Superficial staphylococcal infection
 - Cutaneous Malassezia infection
 - Bilateral external otitis
 - Facial erythema

Additional Tips:

- If seasonal component exists, ideal to test at the end of offending/most symptomatic season; ideal to treat i.e. build tolerance during off season (not always possible).
- Weaning off of steroids/antihistamines/comfort therapies is not necessary for testing but ideal for treatment. If patient maintains on any one of these during treatment it can take longer to see the treatment's full benefits.

WHAT ALLERGY SYMPTOMS LOOK LIKE FOR ANIMALS:

Canine:

Mostly skin related

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- Skin irritation
- Itching/scratching
- Face licking/chewing
- Hair loss
- Rash
- Skin infections

Feline:

Skin and some respiratory

- Excessive grooming
- Hair loss
- Feline acne/granulomas
- Respiratory: sneezing, asthma, nasal discharge
- Watery eyes
- Gastritis
- Vomiting/diarrhea

Equine:

Can be both skin and respiratory

- Urticaria
- Hives/Sweet itch
- Insect Bite Hypersensitivity
- Head shaking/sneezing
- RAO/labored breathing
- Hair loss

WHAT CAN ANIMALS REACT TO?

Animals can be allergic to the same things that cause humans to suffer. These can be pollens like what we find in the air, or proteins that are found in foods.

- Weeds
- Trees
- Grasses
- Indoor Allergens
- Food
- Insects
- Molds

WHAT ALLERGENS SHOULD I TEST FOR AND WHY?

Regionally Specific Inhalant Panel:

The regional panel includes the weeds, trees and grasses that are not only most prone to induce allergic reactions but also those that are most common in your region.

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Keeping in mind that allergens can travel hundreds of miles, there may be allergens that you don't recognize or aren't included that you feel should be. This could be because they haven't been deemed a "significant" allergen or are not wind-pollinated.

Food Panel:

Food allergy is the most likely cause of allergy symptoms in pets less than 1 year of age. The food panel is made up of the 24 most commercially available pet food ingredients for dogs and cats. This means that Spectrum is constantly updating our list to reflect what is being manufactured right now. The diet is the easiest thing to control and can have significant benefits when addressed along side allergy treatment. By pairing these two facets of allergy treatment together, we get a success rate as high as 90%.

Indoor Allergens Panel:

The indoor allergens panel reflects what is found in an indoor home environment. These include things like carpet, furniture upholstery, pillows, and house dust. Unfortunately, these allergens are not available for treatment.

Mold Allergens: (Included in the regional panel)

Mold allergens can be found just about anywhere and produce airborne spores. Their growth is stimulated by warmth and increases in humidity. They tend to therefore be most prevalent during the hot, humid months.

Spectrum's SPOT Platinum+ Panel:

One of the things that make Spectrum's SPOT Platinum+ Panel unique is that we routinely test for 91 allergens. We do this because we want to help you create a "one-and-done" approach to your patients who suffer, not ask you to retest them every year, or every other year. We find that by partnering a comprehensive test with a comprehensive treatment, we not only get success rates as high as 90% but we also create a long-term solution for effective allergy management. That is why a majority of our clients are now switching over to our Test & Treat Package.

If there are allergens that you wish to add that aren't currently found in your panel, you can add them for a nominal fee. Please contact us for details.

EQUINE ALLERGIES 101:

Symptoms:

See page 5 under "What Allergy Symptoms Look Like for Animals".

Allergen Panels:

Regionally Specific Inhalant Panel:

The regional panel includes the weeds, trees and grasses that are not only most prone to induce allergic reactions but also those that are most common in your region. Keeping in mind that allergens can travel hundreds of miles, there may be allergens that

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you don't recognize or aren't included that you feel should be. This could be because they haven't been deemed a "significant" allergen or are not wind pollinated.

Food Panel:

The food panel is made up of the 12 most common horse feed ingredients. Diet is the easiest thing to control and can have significant benefits when addressed along side allergy treatment. By pairing these two facets of allergy treatment together, we get a success rate as high as 90%. If you order the Equine SPOT Platinum Panel we also test for corn, oat, wheat and barley pollen that are airborne, so it is possible to have a horse that doesn't react to corn as a food but reacts to the corn pollen (airborne).

Mold Allergens: (Included in the regional panel)

Mold allergens can be found just about anywhere and produce airborne spores. Their growth is stimulated by warmth and increases in humidity. They tend to therefore be most prevalent during the hot, humid months.

Biting Insect Allergens:

The insect panel includes Cockroach, Culicoides, Mosquito, Stable Fly, Deer Fly, Horse Fly, and Fire Ant. This is a great "add-on" panel but alone may not test for enough potentially offending allergens to successfully get patients under management long-term even if it seems as though their symptoms correlate to when biting insects are most active.

Allergy Treatment:

See page 10 under headings "When is Treatment Appropriate?" and "How Effective is Treatment", as well as page 11 under heading "What Does Spectrum Consider a Success?".

[Have a show or performance horse?](#) Don't worry! Our treatment will not affect their ability to qualify for upcoming competitions.

WHO IS AN IDEAL CANDIDATE FOR ALLERGY TESTING AND TREATMENT?

- Patient is 2 years of age or older
- 3 primary features are present:
 - Pruritus
 - Facial and/or digital involvement
 - Hardening/crusting of sores
 - Chronically-relapsing dermatitis
 - Individual or family history

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- Breed predisposition
- 3 secondary features are present:
 - Onset of signs before 3 years of age
 - Generalized dry skin
 - Superficial staphylococcal infection
 - Cutaneous Malassezia infection
 - Bilateral external otitis
 - Facial erythema

If you have a patient who is under 1 year of age and already presenting with allergy-like symptoms and you have ruled out other possible culprits, we suggest testing for food allergies. We suggest this because food is the only thing they have been exposed to long enough to create a sensitivity to. If you were to run a full allergy panel, you would see reactions however it could be maternal antibodies. Those change over time and treatment on such young animals can be difficult as their allergy profiles can/do change, and their immune system is still developing.

WHY SERUM ALLERGY TESTING?

- Numeric value rather than visual confirmation
- No steroid/antihistamine withdrawal for testing
- Non-invasive
- Saves time & money
- Places allergy management in your hands
- Increases practice profitability while enhancing patient care
- Provides a quick assessment of food hypersensitivity

WHY SPECTRUM VETERINARY?

- Increased services/care to existing client base
- Test for more-including foods; lower price
- List of approved foods provided.
- Two different options for treatment: injections & drops
- Unique compliance tools provided to pet parent
- Same technology used by Veterinary Dermatologist
- Competitor retest provided at no charge, up to 5 per year/per clinic

HOW TO SUBMIT A SAMPLE:

The allergy testing done via Spectrum Veterinary's SPOT test is steroid independent meaning it is NOT necessary to wean patient off steroids, antihistamines or cyclosporine for testing purposes. Once the blood has been spun down to serum, please pour into the Spectrum approved plastic tubes. (Please note: if you do not have the plastic tubes, a red top or tiger top will suffice but please request more tubes so we can ensure you have everything you need.)

- 3 – 5 ml of serum
- Absolute minimum - 1.5 ml.
- Order & History Form
- Pre-paid FedEx mailers provided
- Within 72 hours of the samples receipt, the results are e-mailed/faxed to the ordering Veterinarian

WHAT OUR ALLERGY RESULTS TELL YOU?

Allergy testing provides a snapshot of the immune system as it relates to the offending allergens. Any results scoring over 100 ARU's are considered significant allergens and therefore should be avoided, or if it is not possible to avoid, treated for (no food allergens). Not only do we fax/email the results as soon as they are ready, we also send a 24-page custom allergy profile booklet to you, for your pet parent. In the booklet, not only do we color code where all the reactions appear, we also provide you with:

- A list of foods free from offending allergens (see page 10 for more info on "Food Allergies and Serum Testing")
- A general overview on:
 - Allergies
 - Types of treatment
 - Source guide as to where the allergens are found in the environment
 - Allergy questionnaire
 - Guide to "allergy proofing" your home

Our approach to treatment:

Spectrum recommends to treat for all allergens patient reactions, either by allergy injections or oral drops. We find that treating for/or accommodating, all reactions creates a long-term allergy solution with reduced likelihood of retesting. We can fit up to 20 allergens in a single treatment set, or can also follow AAAI guidelines for allergy injections upon request.

FOOD ALLERGIES AND SERUM TESTING

There are two main ways to identify food allergies: food elimination diets (which have a failure rate of over 90%) or a serum blood test that measures the presence of IgE. Elimination diets greatly restrict the foods a patient can consume to a minimum number of protein sources, and then slowly reintroduce omitted proteins to see if clinical signs reappear. This process usually takes 6-8 weeks and is more based on the trial & error methodology.

Serum testing challenges the patient's serum against the 24 most commercially available pet food ingredients. Once we have those results we can provide a list of food/treat options that are a great starting point for a dietary modification that is much more likely to yield positive results.

WHEN IS TREATMENT APPROPRIATE?

If dietary adjustment isn't enough to reduce a patient's symptoms OR if the patient has a large number of reactions (18+) it is beneficial to start treatment as soon as possible. If there is a time of year when a patient's symptoms are worse than others, it is always best to test at the end of the offending season. This allows us to ensure ample exposure to the largest number of potentially problematic allergens. Please indicate on the Patient History Form that seasonal allergies seem to be an issue for the patient, if applicable. If you proceed with allergy treatment, it will also be necessary to maintain the allergen year-round, not just during the offending season.

Allergies are a lifelong problem, therefore the best way to ensure long-term success is to encourage the pet parent to maintain the tolerated levels as long as possible. If you stop allergy treatment at any time, you run the risk that we need to reestablish tolerance by starting over completely.

Concerned your patient may be over stimulated by the allergy injections?

We have a Technical Services Department that are here to help you review and determine the best next steps for each of your patients that seem to continue to suffer. We can also help you with patients who are reaching the end of Vial C (the red topped vial) in the initial treatment set, and pet parents feel the allergens are not helping. It is necessary, when reviewing these cases, to provide us with the following information: date of last dosage, dosage amount, color of vial, symptoms and how soon post injection the symptoms occur. Symptoms can also occur in between dosages.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS TREATMENT?

The efficacy of treatment depends on several factors: including the number of allergens treated for versus the number of total reactions, pet parent compliance, and the proper storage of allergen.

Common Success Rates are as follows:

- Dietary alone: 50% success
- Allergy treatment alone: 66% success
- Allergy treatment and dietary together: 90% success

WHAT DOES SPECTRUM VETERINARY CONSIDER A SUCCESS?

At Spectrum Veterinary, our goal is to give patient's back their quality of life and reduce or eliminate their dependence on steroids or other drugs. We determine a success when both veterinarian and pet parent can look at the pet and know that is better.

Oftentimes when we can't say the patient is better, and it is in fact suffering from allergies, we are able to work with the Veterinarian and pet parent to adjust or monitor patient protocol to determine where the ideal maintenance dosage should be.

ALLERGY DROPS VERSUS INJECTIONS?

A pet parent's honest feedback is the best tool to determine which treatment methodology will meet both parent and patient needs. The pros and cons of each methodology are listed below:

About Allergy Drops

Allergy drops are the latest in hyposensitization delivery method, perfect for pet owners who prefer a needle free option or pets who have had issues tolerating allergy injections in the past.

PROS

- Simple administration between cheek and gums
- Needle free

CONS

- Requires daily administration
- No food or drink 10 minutes before or after giving drops

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About Allergy Injections

Allergy injections have been used in both human and veterinary medicine for decades with great success

PROS

- History of proven success
- Build up to once a month injections

CONS

- Uses needles
- Requires extract to be at room temperature

ALLERGY TREATMENT SCHEDULE: INJECTIONS

	Dose	Day	Interval (Days)
Vial A Green	0.1 ml	1	0
	0.2 ml	3	2
	0.4 ml	5	2
	0.6 ml	7	2
	0.8 ml	9	2
	1.0 ml	11	2
	1.0 ml	13	2
	1.0 ml	15	5
	1.0 ml	20	5
	Dose	Day	Interval (Days)
Vial B Blue	0.1 ml	25	5
	0.2 ml	30	5
	0.4 ml	36	6
	0.6 ml	42	6
	0.8 ml	48	10
	1.0 ml	58	10
	1.0 ml	68	10
	1.0 ml	78	10
	1.0 ml	88	10
	Dose	Day	Interval (Days)
Vial C Red	0.3 ml	98	14
	0.5 ml	112	21
	0.5 ml	133	30
	0.6 ml	163	30
	0.8 ml	193	30
	1.0 ml	223	30
	1.0 ml	255	30
	1.0 ml	283	30

CALL YOUR VET TO ORDER MAINTENANCE

Injections starts at a two-day interval and works up to a once per month injection.

Spectrum provides the pet parent with the opportunity to create their own treatment calendar. Click [here](#) for details...

Concerned a patient may be over stimulated by the allergy injections? Contact us to assist you.

ALLERGY TREATMENT SCHEDULE: DROPS

Sublingual allergy drops are a great solution for pet parents who prefer a needle free option and/or have pets that have had issues tolerating allergy injections in the past. Proper and consistent administration is the key to success with allergy drops. This method requires daily administration and no food or drink 10 minutes before or after the drops. The dosage amount is based on a patient's weight: under 22lbs = 2 drops, over 22lbs = 3 drops.

Each vial contains 300 drops, therefore treatment lasts 150 days for a patient receiving 2 drops, and 100 days for a patient receiving 3 drops.

Allergy drops take a minimum of 3-5 months before we see the full benefits they are going to provide the patient and should be maintained year round, even for seasonally allergic patients.

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REASONS FOR POOR ALLERGY TREATMENT RESPONSE:

- Older animals generally give a poor immune response
- Poor owner compliance with hyposensitization regimen
- Undetected allergens in animals environment
- Suppressed immune system
- If a complete dermatological work up was not done, it could be endocrine or thyroid rather than allergy

DISCOUNT PROGRAMS

At Spectrum Veterinary we want to make working with us an easy transition for you. We also want to do everything we can to help you create your own success stories rather than just taking our word for it. Here are a few programs we offer that can help your clients and employees take advantage of our partnership.

Employee Discount:

- Discount of \$65 off a SPOT Platinum allergy panel
- Notate on paperwork "Employee Pet"

CRT (Competitive Retest Program):

- Patient tested at another lab or local dermatologist
- Can be skin testing or serum testing
- Minimum of 20 allergens tested with original test
- Can be recent or years old
- Limit 5 competitor retest per clinic
- Attach previous results to sample and Spectrum Order Form, notate on paperwork "Competitor Retest"
- We will run a full 91 antigen panel at no charge
- Employees with pets previously tested are also eligible
- Click [here](#) for the most current CRT information

TOOLS/SUPPORT

Successful allergy management requires a multifaceted approach, because no two allergy cases are the same or have the same needs. Here at Spectrum Veterinary we provide pet parents with links to online videos that give them insights as to the advantages of this form of testing/treatment, what to do if the pet has an increase in symptoms or symptoms reappear while on treatment, what to do if they miss an injection, along with various other scenarios that may inhibit the pet from achieving the maximum benefits.

Customer Service

Our customer service team is here to help you though any of the various scenarios that may arise during the process of allergy testing and treatment. We are here from 7am-5pm Mountain Standard Time, Monday-Friday.

It is our goal to answer your questions within a single call, please make sure if you are calling about a specific patient, that you have their name (first and last) as it is listed on their lab report or their lab number. Veterinarians and technicians only please.

Technical Support

We provide you and your veterinary staff with a multitude of online tools and resources (see below) as well as technical support should a client contact you with any question or issues during treatment. With over 26 years of experience, we have encountered just about every scenario imaginable. We do not want any clinic to feel isolated in deciding on any adjustments should they be necessary. While an increase in symptoms is rare, we are here to support you every step of the way. If a patient is experiencing an increase in symptoms, please have the following information ready when calling:

- date of last injection
- vial color
- dosage amount
- symptoms
- how soon after injection, symptoms occurred

Staff Training

Does your staff need an overview or a refresher course on Spectrum's approach to allergy testing and treatment? Click [here](#) to schedule a webinar that can bring staff, old and new, up to speed on the latest techniques for allergy management.

"How to" Videos

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These [videos](#) provide you a basic overview on allergy injections: how to give an injection, what to do if you leave the allergenic extract out, and various other scenarios. We strongly recommend you review them on behalf of your pet parents so you are aware of the instructions we provide and advise alternatively if you feel it best for a patient's unique situation.

Client Access

Current Spectrum clients can view past results, pay bills, request supplies and much more. To reach our client access, [click here](#). Please note that you will need to have your Spectrum account number. Because we verify this manually it can take up to 24 hours for you to gain access, unless you give us a call and advise you are trying to log on.

Request a Shipping Label

Have a sample ready to ship? Generate a pre-paid FedEx label [here](#) and call FedEx to schedule a pick up!

Custom Treatment Calendar

Generate a custom [treatment calendar](#) and register for email reminders so you never miss an injection again! Great tool for pet owners to ensure compliance.

Allergy Injection Reminders

To help the pet parent remember when an injection is due, Spectrum is working to perfect our Treatment App [that is currently in beta testing](#) (**allergy.vet** on both google and the apple store) that will provide allergy reminders on their phone on the day a injection is due. The email includes the pet's name, volume amount and color of the vial to minimize errors.

Competitor Retest Program

Not seeing the results you expected from another allergy test? We will retest that patient AT NO COST just provide us a copy of the previous test results. That's how confident we are that you will finally get the results you've been looking for. Click [here](#) for more details.

Regional Map:

Our allergy test is regionally specific, to find out which allergens are tested for in your region, visit our interactive [regional map](#).

Frequently Asked Questions:

This list makes up our most [commonly asked questions](#) related to allergy testing and treatment. Don't see your question listed? Feel free to submit it at the bottom of the FAQ page and we will get back to you within 1-2 business days.

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Testimonials:

Our testing and treatment works, but don't take our word for it. Here are some [testimonials](#) from veterinarians and pet parents. Feel free to upload your experiences here as well!

Social Media:

Have a Facebook page? Feel free to connect with us [there](#) and to see what other Veterinarians are saying about Spectrum Veterinary.