

Oral Desensitization – Walnut



What is it?

Oral Desensitization to walnut is a way to enable your child to not react to small accidental exposures to walnut.

The idea behind food desensitization is to gradually build up tolerance to that particular food by giving it initially in minute quantities. When those quantities are tolerated, the amount is progressively increased up to a certain threshold.

It is important to recognize that walnut oral desensitization has currently not been shown to result in permanent tolerance. When oral desensitization is discontinued, it is expected that within a few months your child will revert back to their initial state of not tolerating cashew at all. Therefore, walnut desensitization therapy is currently considered lifelong treatment.

The protocol is designed to minimize the risk of anaphylaxis with accidental ingestion of small quantities of walnut.

Why do this?

There are many reasons why parents choose to do this. A number of studies have shown significant improvement in quality of life of families whose child can tolerate small amounts of the food they are allergic to. These families report eating outside the home, travelling again or even having walnut at home. The best person to decide whether to do this is you.

What do I get?

You will need to purchase two things:



1 - "Elmhurst Walnut Milk - made with two simple ingredients". This is currently available at Blush Lane Organics, but other stores may carry it as well. It is also available online, such as amazon.ca.

2 – Ground up walnut and walnuts. Make sure the walnut is not contaminated with other ingredients.

How is it performed?

We start with a miniscule dose and increase from there. The first dose is 5 mg of the allergen, while the final dose is 500 mg. For the initial dose, you will need to be in our clinic for 1 – 1.5 hours. Dose escalations occur at a minimum every two weeks (can be more than 2 weeks if you desire). This is performed in our clinic and your child needs to be observed for 30 minutes. Bring your EpiPen to your appointment. Your child must be in good health and must not eat or drink 30 minutes before the scheduled appointment. If the dose escalation is scheduled to occur during a time that our clinic is closed, stay at the current dose until the next available appointment.

Frequently taking antihistamines, such as rupatadine 2.5 ml – 5 ml daily during build-up can minimize reactions such as oral discomfort and mild hives. This is optional.

What do I do after each appointment?

- Take the dose every day at the same time.
- Take with a meal or snack
- Avoid exercise 2 hours before or after
- Hold dose or decrease dose by 50% if your child has a fever or is ill with a viral illness
- Resume dose at home if you have missed less than 3 daily doses
- Contact us if you have missed for than 3 daily doses

Walnut desensitization is only offered to children less than 5 years of age.