

## Could it be an allergy?

### Did you know...

1 in 3 people are affected by an allergy at some point in their life\* with symptoms ranging from irritating sneezing through to potentially fatal anaphylaxis.

There is a large number of people who are undiagnosed, often because resources for diagnosis and treatment of allergy are scarce, however it is estimated that numbers of those suffering from allergy are rising in the region of 5% per year. Around 40% of children suffer from one or more allergies, but allergies can also develop later in life and have wide ranging effects on an individual's standard of living.

\* Royal College of Physicians Report,  
Allergy - The Unmet Need - June 2003



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# Sneezing? Rash? Swelling? Itchy eyes?

Ask your pharmacist about their  
allergy screening service



 Ask at your pharmacy



## What is an allergy?

An allergy is a reaction of your immune system to a substance known as an allergen which is generally harmless and does not bother most people. Common allergens are :-

- Pollen
- Dust mites
- Mould
- Pets
- Food
- Insect stings / bites
- Medicines

Reactions can have one or many symptoms including asthma, sneezing, wheezing, itching, runny nose and sometimes swelling.

## What can I do about it?

Your local pharmacist, working in conjunction with Allergy UK, a national registered medical charity, can help by providing you with a convenient and effective allergy screening service delivered through your local pharmacy.

**You will receive advice from a specially trained healthcare professional – the Allergy UK accredited service means the pharmacist has been through a rigorous training programme and will be able to give you a reliable screening and advice.**

## How do I use the Pharmacy Allergy Service?

Ask at your pharmacy for the 'Allergy UK Screening Service'. You may be seen on the same day or be asked to make an appointment.

**We know that 1 in 3 of the population are affected by allergy at some time in their life\*, many more are self diagnosed**

\* Royal College of Physicians Report, Allergy - The Unmet Need - June 2003

**You will have a consultation in a private consultation area, where you will be asked questions about your symptoms, medical history and other relevant information which will take about 20 minutes.**

About 80% of allergy screening is based on clinical history, however, you may wish to have the result confirmed by an IgE Allergy test. Your pharmacist may recommend that you have a test to confirm the diagnosis but you will be under no obligation to have this auxiliary test.

If you do choose to have the test it will be done by taking a drop of blood from your finger. The test measures the allergy antibody – Immunoglobulin E (IgE ). Your pharmacist will give you a 'same day' confirmation of the results.

Following your screening Allergy UK will provide you with an information pack to help you manage your allergy, tailored according to the results of your screening. They will stay in touch with you if you wish and offer a range of on-going support services including access to a helpline, translation cards to help you manage your allergy if you are abroad, food allergy alerts and other information updates.

## What are the advantages of this service?

The service offered in this pharmacy provides you with the assurance that:-

**You are receiving clinically sound advice. Some commercially available allergy tests may not be reliable, particularly some postal services requiring hair, urine or other samples.**

Your pharmacist has had specialist training provided by Allergy UK so can offer you **advice that may avoid the need for an allergy test altogether**. If you do have a test the pharmacist's training will ensure that you get clear results and specialist advice on managing your symptoms.

After your allergy screening, your pharmacist will give you a convenient summary card to keep in your wallet. You can show this card to your GP so that they can update your records and continue with your treatment.

**Allergy UK** will give you help and support tailored just for you, to enable you to better understand and manage your allergies.

## Ask your pharmacist today

