

Allergy Testing



How allergy testing
helps with the
management of
allergy



ALLERGY TESTING YOUR PET

WHY ALLERGY TEST?

If your pet has been suffering with symptoms such as itchy reddened skin, recurrent skin or ear infections and fur loss, it is possible they may be suffering with allergies.

Having ruled out other causes of these symptoms, such as fleas and other skin parasites, your vet may recommend doing an allergy test.

Allergy testing is an effective way of finding out exactly which environmental allergens your pet may be allergic to.

By pinpointing the allergens that trigger your pet's symptoms, a suitable treatment plan can be implemented to help reduce the symptoms and prevent future flare-ups.



WHAT DOES ALLERGY TESTING SHOW?

Allergy testing will identify sensitivities to a variety of environmental allergens. These include both seasonal and non-seasonal allergens such as:



**Flower
Pollen**



**Weed
Pollen**



**Tree
Pollen**



Moulds



Fleas



Mites



Epithelia



ALLERGY TESTING YOUR PET

BENEFITS OF ALLERGY TESTING

Allergy testing will tell you which allergens your pet is sensitive to and help to better understand their disease and how to treat it.

By knowing the allergens, you may be able avoid or reduce exposure to them to help reduce symptoms. Your vet will also be better able to tailor a suitable treatment plan based on when your pet is likely to be symptomatic.

For example, if your pet has an allergy to flower pollen, you can predict when your pet's symptoms will flare up and plan treatment for that period. This may involve a short course of medication to reduce itching and topical therapy to prevent minimise symptoms during the flower pollen season.



WHY ALLERGY TEST YOUR PET



Prove what allergens your pet is sensitive to so exposure can be minimised



Predict when your pet will likely get symptomatic



Prepare financially for periods when symptoms flare up



Prevent secondary skin & ear infections by looking out for the early signs of infection



Plan effective treatment protocols



Proactively manage your pets allergy



ALLERGY TESTING YOUR PET

ALLERGY TESTING TO TAILOR TREATMENT

There are different treatments that can help manage the symptoms of allergy. Often, a multi-modal approach that combines treatments is recommended to manage these symptoms.

Treatments can help cure the underlying disease and manage the itching associated with allergy. Some treatments can help restore skin barrier function and manage and prevent secondary skin and ear infections.

Allergy testing can help formulate treatment plans that can manage the underlying cause of the disease eg immunotherapy. In addition, it can help determine for how long your pet may need other medications throughout the year.



TREATMENT OPTIONS



Allergen Specific Immunotherapy



Itch blocking medications



Skin shampoos, foams, wipes



Environmental Sprays



Ear Cleaners



Essential Fatty Acids



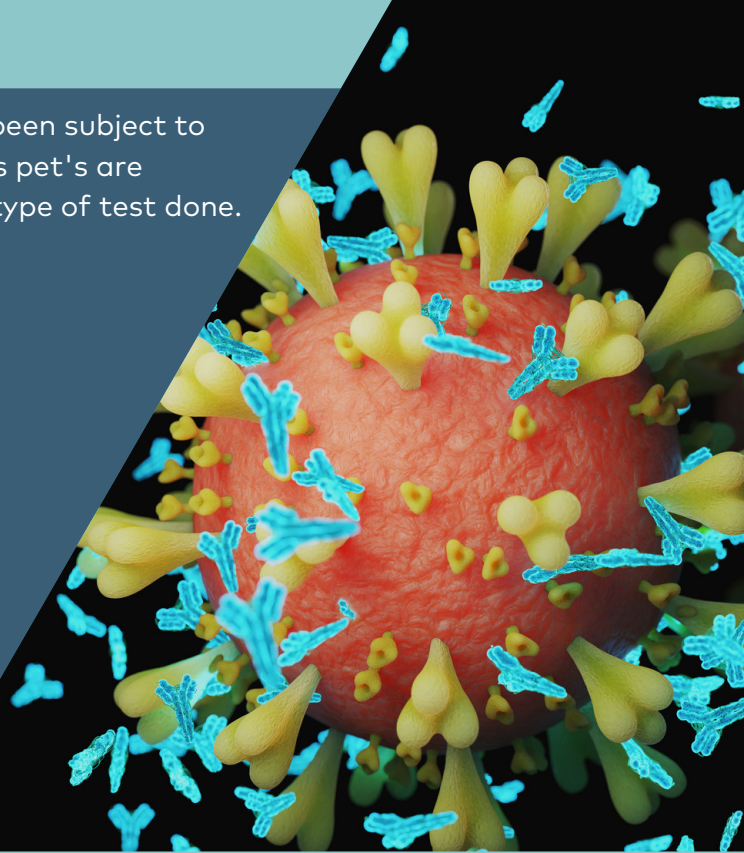
ALLERGY TESTING YOUR PET

IS ALLERGY TESTING RELIABLE?

Allergy testing techniques and methods have in the past been subject to criticism that they do not accurately show which allergens pet's are allergic to. How reliable an allergy test is depends on the type of test done.

Thanks to recent updates in allergy testing methodology, allergy serum testing which involves looking for IgE against environmental allergens in the animals blood, is now recognised as being very reliable. The latest test technology can show with a high degree of accuracy exactly which allergens your pet is sensitive to. Intradermal skin testing where allergens are injected into the skin, is also a reliable method undertaken by some vets.

Other forms of allergy test such as saliva or hair tests are proven to be unreliable and should not be undertaken.



ALLERGY TESTING FOR FOOD ALLERGY

Allergic symptoms in pets may also be caused by sensitivity to certain foods. This is called food allergy and it is important to rule out food allergy when working-up the cause of your pet's symptoms.

It is commonly accepted that allergy testing cannot be done to diagnose food allergy and the only way to prove a food allergy is to do an elimination food trial. This involves feeding your pet a novel protein source for 8-12 weeks and seeing if the symptoms improve.

If symptoms resolve or improve then food allergy can be diagnosed. If they don't then it is likely your pet is not food allergic or if they partially improve it indicates that your pet may also suffer from environmental allergies which they can then be tested for.

The value of serum testing for food allergy is that it can either help determine which foods you can provoke the animal with to look for clinical signs, or to help choose a suitable diet for use during the elimination food trial which does not contain foods they may be sensitive to.





ALLERGY TESTING YOUR PET

ALLERGY TESTING CAN HELP REDUCE LONG-TERM COSTS

Managing a pet with allergies is often life-long and treatment can be expensive. However, allergy testing may help reduce the long-term costs involved in managing an allergic pet.

Without knowing what exactly your pet is allergic to, you will not know when their symptoms are likely to start or how long they will last, especially if they are only allergic to seasonal allergens like pollen. As a result, expensive medications may be given for longer than they need to be as many can be reduced or withdrawn when allergens are not in season.

Allergy testing will also give you the option of doing Allergen Specific Immunotherapy (ASIT) which is considered the gold standard treatment for allergy. This involves an initial one off cost for a 10-month course of treatment that desensitises your pet to the allergens that trigger the allergic symptoms. ASIT is a lifelong treatment so there is a yearly one-off cost for each new vaccine but the majority of patients respond positively and as a result the dependence on other medications becomes less, saving you money over the course of your pet's life.

Allergen avoidance strategies which can be better implemented after doing an allergy test will also help reduce costs long term as they may help minimise symptoms and reduce flare-ups that require treatment. Many products that help with reducing exposure to allergens such as shampoos, foams, wipes and environmental sprays are lower cost and last months, so the cost is spread out.

Moreover, allergy testing allows you to better predict when your pet will likely get symptom flare-ups so you can financially plan for times of the year when treatment costs may rise.





ALLERGY TESTING YOUR PET

ALLERGEN AVOIDANCE

Another key benefit of allergy testing is that it can help you create allergen avoidance plans that help reduce your pet's exposure to the allergens they are sensitive to. For example, if the allergy test proves a positive sensitivity to house dust, it may be sensible to increase the frequency of vacuuming and bed washing. Your pet may also benefit from environmental sprays that reduce dust exposure. More frequent bathing can also help wash allergens off of the coat.

If your pet is shown to have allergies to pollen you may be able to alter walking routes to avoid the trees and plants that trigger a reaction. You can plan the timing of walks based on pollen count and can rinse their paws and coats after walks with easy-to-use foams and wipes.





THE ALLERGY JOURNEY

UNDERSTANDING ALLERGY & ALLERGY MANAGEMENT

For more information on allergy including what causes it, how to diagnose and treat it as well as lots of other useful information please scan the QR code or visit:

<https://go.nextmune.com/theallergyjourney>



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