



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ON ALLERGY TESTING

### 1. How long before allergy testing should I stop steroids?

Recommended steroid withdrawal depends on the type of steroid used and the length of time it has been used for the possible effect on IgE levels:

For prednisolone/prednisone less than 3 months, no withdrawal is needed as IgE levels are unlikely to be significantly affected.

Prednisolone/prednisone given for longer than 3 months:

- above 0.25mg/kg/day: 45 days withdrawal
- less than 0.25mg/kg/day: 21 days withdrawal

Injectable triamcinolone: 60 days withdrawal

Methylprednisolone acetate injection: 90 days withdrawal

Long term topical steroid preparations: 30 days (ophthalmic, otic)

Serum testing for allergies can generally be done while using topical steroids as they do not tend to cause a severe drop in serum IgE levels unless they have been used consistently for greater than 3 months. However, it is always recommended that the tests be done with nothing that might interfere, but in many cases this may not be possible.

### 2. How long before testing should I stop Apoquel® (oclacitinib) or Atopica® (ciclosporin)?

In short term studies in dogs, neither oclacitinib nor ciclosporin have shown any significant effects on serum IgE testing or intradermal skin testing for allergic dermatitis.

Anecdotally, many dogs have been successfully tested after greater than 1 year of therapy with either medication. Also, in long-term human studies, there tends to be no decrease in serum IgE over many years of treatment with ciclosporin for atopic dermatitis.

### 3. What about food allergy testing?

At this time, unfortunately there is still no food allergy test for dogs that is reliable enough to be recommended.

There are multiple reasons that this is the case. Partially, this is because food allergies/adverse food reactions have multiple underlying aetiologies, and are not just IgE mediated (or IgG, IgM, IgA). Many are not mediated by or related to antibodies. Also, many foods can cause non-relevant elevations in antibody without there being a food allergy. A recent study in human medicine that looked at nearly 100,000 people with food allergies showed that only 48.1% were IgE mediated. The rest were caused by different types of hypersensitivity.

There are currently no types of tests available (serum, saliva, patch testing, intradermal testing) for food allergies that do not have too significant a number of both false positives and false negatives to give a completely trustable answer. And unfortunately, they give a false sense to the owner of “having an answer” when it may not be accurate.

On the horizon: Currently there are two promising areas of research into canine food allergy testing that may be of use for helping to identify food allergies or food sensitivities in the future. These are still to be validated in dogs with confirmed food allergies via dietary-provocation to see if they are dependable. AVD is following these company tests with great interest and hopes to offer them if they have a high enough specificity and sensitivity to give useable and dependable results.

#### **4. How do I order immunotherapy?**

If you would like to order injectable or sublingual immunotherapy subsequent to allergy test recommendations, please tick the chosen option for Immunotherapy on your report and email or fax it back to Asia Veterinary Diagnostics (avdallergy@asiaveterinarydiagnostics.com) or fax no. 23713183.

#### **5. What is the protocol for immunotherapy administration?**

The protocol for immunotherapy administration (injectable or sublingual administration) will be indicated on the leaflet included in the package that will be delivered to you.

#### **6. What if I want extra support to follow up my patients during the immunotherapy?**

If you want extra support and year-round consultation to follow up your patients during the treatment time, please contact Asia Veterinary Diagnostics (avdallergy@asiaveterinarydiagnostics.com) or fax no. 2371 3183 to book a one-year consultation package with our dermatology specialist.