



FOOD ORAL IMMUNOTHERAPY (OIT) FAQs

Q 1. How long will the entire OIT process take?

- The entire OIT treatment process is typically completed in 6 to 12 months. It is important to note each patient is different; some patients will require more time to complete the treatment program.

Q 2. How long will I need to be in the office for the OIT appointments?

- The first day visit in the OIT process can last as long as six to eight hours. Subsequent, weekly dose escalation/up dose appointments usually last one to one-and-a-half hours.

Q 3. Do I need to come every week for dosage escalation visits? What if I live far or I cannot make it to a weekly appointment?

- You do not need to up dose every week. Patients may schedule up dose visits every two weeks. If you miss an up dose appointment it will not affect the treatment process. It will, however, extend the duration of treatment.

Q 4. Should routine medications be stopped before or during OIT?

- No. Patients should continue to take all routine medications including all allergy and asthma medications. Additionally, all OIT patients should take a probiotic daily (we recommend the brand [Florajen4Kids®](#)). Vitamin D levels will be checked prior to OIT. If levels are low, vitamin D supplementation will be recommended. Both probiotics and vitamin D should be started prior to OIT.

Q 5. After the first day, can up dose appointments be scheduled at either office? Do we ever up dose at home?

- The first day of OIT visits only take place at our Suffern office but all other escalation/up dose appointments can be made in either location. Patients are NEVER to up dose at home. If you miss a dose, or are unable to make it to an up dose appointment, please contact our office for instructions.

Q 6. How often is the dose increased?

- Doses are typically increased every 7 days during the weekly escalation/up dose office visit.

Q 7. After an OIT appointment will I continue to take a dose at home until my next appointment? Do I dose once a day or twice a day?

- Yes, you will continue to take a dose at home until your next appointment. You will dose once a day.

Q 8. What time of day should home doses be given?

- Doses should be given every 24 hours at approximately the same time every day. There is no requirement as to the time of day that the dose is given but we discourage late night dosing.

Q 9. If there is a reaction at home, what should I do?

- Treat the reaction the same way you would any food allergy reaction: Benadryl® and/or Epi-Pen®/Auvi Q® as indicated. If the patient is experiencing mouth itching ONLY, hold off on giving antihistamine and observe if symptoms resolve without medication. Do NOT hold off treating other symptoms of allergic reaction or if the oral symptoms continue to persist. Call our office immediately for further instructions. In case of emergency, call 911. If you need to reach us after office hours, we have an answering service. You will be transferred to our on-call provider.

Q 10. When can foods containing the allergenic food be introduced into the regular diet?

- Foods containing the allergenic food may be introduced into the diet at the end of the entire oral immunotherapy escalation process as instructed by your provider.

Q 11. What is the goal of this process?

- The number one goal of OIT is to make life safer for the patient. We are seeking to systematically introduce the allergenic food into our patient's diet so as to reduce the risk of an allergic reaction. We also seek to improve the patient's quality of life.



Q 12. What is the follow up schedule when maintenance dosing is reached?

- Upon completion of OIT, there are follow up appointments at 1 month, 3 month and 6 month intervals, and then every 6 months thereafter. Skin and blood testing will be performed at various intervals.

Q 13. Do I need to avoid exercise during the oral immunotherapy process?

- Exercise should be avoided ½ hour before dosing and for at least 2 hours after dosing. Select patients may need to wait longer. Exercising around the time of dosing increases the risk of a reaction. Exercise restriction applies to both escalation and maintenance dosing.

Q 14. Following completion of the oral immunotherapy process, will I still have to continue eating the food allergen on a regular basis?

- Following the completion of OIT, you must continue to take a daily maintenance dose of the food allergen. The doses vary depending on the allergenic food. Should the frequency of maintenance dose change, we will let you know. Until then, you must continue the daily maintenance dose as directed.

Q 15. If I am allergic to multiple foods, will completing OIT for one food help treat other food allergies?

- Each OIT program is food-specific. Completing one program does not treat other food allergies. Ask your provider for more specific information for treating multiple food allergies.

Q 16. After the completion of the oral immunotherapy process, when can a food challenge be done for another food?

- One may do a food challenge for a different food one (1) week after completing OIT.

Q 17. How soon after completion of oral immunotherapy treatment can I start a second oral immunotherapy treatment for another food?

- Your child may begin OIT for a different food allergen after he/she has been stable on a maintenance dose for one month.

Q 18. Can two oral immunotherapy foods, one on maintenance and one on increasing doses be given at the same time?

- Yes.

Q 19. If the patient is a child, can they begin the OIT process if they do not get immunizations or are behind on scheduled immunizations?

- No. Your child must be up to date on all scheduled immunizations before starting any of the oral immunotherapy programs.

Q 20. How is the oral immunotherapy program billed and what does it cost?

- Actual reimbursement varies by insurance plan. As with other appointments, all deductibles, copays and coinsurances are the responsibility of the patient. Additionally, there is a one-time supply charge for all the materials needed for at-home dosing. This fee does **NOT** include pharmacy or food expenses.

Q 21. What should I do if I have more questions?

- Send an email to the office, at contact@aacrockland.com, with your questions and your contact information and a provider will contact you with the answers.

We encourage you to visit www.oit101.org for more information.