

## Allergy Treatment Under the Tongue

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DENVER — National Jewish patients who have been involved in a yearlong allergy study will face their first test of the treatment in early May, when grass pollen season begins. For the past year, patients in the project have undergone oral immunotherapy treatments for their allergy. Traditional immunotherapy, also known as allergy shots, is one of the most effective allergy treatments. Repeatedly injecting an allergen under the skin actually alters the immune system so that it no longer reacts to pollen and other allergens. Immunotherapy begins having a positive effect for most people soon after shots begin and is usually effective for many years after shots have been completed. But having to get shots at a doctor's office repeatedly for three to five years has limited its appeal and use.

National Jewish allergist Dr. Harold Nelson is conducting the trial of immunotherapy drops that are placed under the tongue instead. These could be administered at home, which could make immunotherapy a more attractive option for allergy sufferers. This is a safer method of immunotherapy, with minimal risk of severe reaction.

Allergy drops have been used for several years in Europe. Several trials are currently evaluating allergy drops for possible approval in the United States. However, in Europe and in most of the U.S. trials, allergy drops include only one allergen. Most people are allergic to several allergens, from various pollens to dust mites and animal dander. That is why most American immunotherapy solutions contain several different allergens. Dr. Nelson's trial evaluates allergy drops containing several different allergens to see if they are effective as well.

**National Jewish Health** is the leading respiratory hospital in the nation. Founded 124 years ago as a nonprofit hospital, National Jewish Health today is the only facility in the world dedicated exclusively to groundbreaking medical research and treatment of patients with respiratory, cardiac, immune and related disorders. Patients and families come to National Jewish Health from around the world to receive cutting-edge, comprehensive, coordinated care. To learn more, visit the media resources page.

### Media Contacts

Our team is available to arrange interviews, discuss events and story ideas.

**Jessica Berry**  
303.398.1082  
berryj@njhealth.org