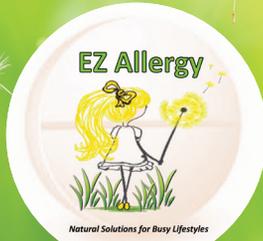


EZ Allergy

Helping You Make Allergy Season Less Irritating



If you have allergies, Dr. David Skoner should be a familiar name for you. As a board-certified allergist and immunologist actively researching issues relating to his area of practice, Dr. Skoner is a familiar voice in the news, and now he's opening a practice in Peters Township this summer to help those with allergy issues.

EZ Allergy promises to be a cutting-edge allergy and immunology practice helping to educate and navigate people through the oftentimes confusing and ever-changing journey with environmental and food allergies and allergic asthma.

"There are a lot of people who guess they're allergic to something, but they're not sure. Sometimes, symptoms are not due to allergies. Additionally, there are so many things to which you can be allergic; you don't know for sure which one: is it mold, dust, cat or dog? The only way to know for sure if you're allergic and to which allergens is to get skin tested," Dr. Skoner says. Once the skin is tested and the allergy isolated, patients can begin receiving treatment to quell their symptoms.

In addition to environmental allergens, he notes that allergies may be food related, which is an area of frequent misdiagnosis for people. "With food allergies, doctors usually tell people to avoid the suspect foods and have an EpiPen around in case they ingest the food allergen," Dr. Skoner explains. "Lots of patients go to other specialists and are told they're allergic to many, even up to 30, foods. Then they see us, and we may find that they are not allergic after all, so we have to find ways to get some of those foods back into their diet after they are misdiagnosed." It is important to remember also that because children are growing and developing, some diagnosed food allergies can subside over time (especially in babies), which only reinforces the need for accurate skin testing at regular intervals.

In the old days, the only form of immune-based therapy for environmental allergies came by way of allergy shots, once a week in an office for 9 months while the doses build up. But because of the time, pain and cost involved, allergy shots tended to be utilized in only the most difficult cases; most people opted for over-the-counter medications, but they can come with their own array of side effects.

Dr. Skoner became convinced that environmental allergy sufferers need to use more all-natural allergen immunotherapy after taking care of a little girl named Maci, who developed life-threatening side effects of commonly used allergy and asthma medications containing corticosteroids.

Fortunately, Dr. Skoner has long been a proponent of allergen extract immunotherapy tablets—simple, dissolving tablets that are placed under the tongue. The therapy is inexpensive and can be done in the home rather than a doctor's office.

Approved by the FDA, the tablets dissolve and penetrate the membrane under the tongue, get absorbed and modify the immune system just like allergy shots. Consequently, we can now give more people allergen immunotherapy in the form of a comfortable tablet to take at home, especially people for whom OTC medications aren't the right fit and those who don't like the pain or inconvenience of office-based allergy shots.

"Medications are a Band-Aid on the allergic condition, which is due to a chronic imbalance of the immune system. Immunotherapy is much more preventive in nature and works on the immune system to correct the underlying abnormality. Medications often don't work, aren't tolerated well and have side effects. Antihistamines cause sedation and can impact learning in children, and nasal sprays can suppress growth, yet they've been approved for children as young as 2 years of age for over-the-counter sales," Dr. Skoner says. "Impressive immunotherapy results have been shown in huge clinical trials, and people on allergen immunotherapy use less synthetic drugs/medications. It's a breakthrough. It's a way to deliver allergen immunotherapy to more people in need."

Inspired by a little girl and a little tablet, EZ Allergy will take flight in a big way to open to patients on June 26 in Peters Township in McMurray Towne Center at 453 Valley Brook, Suite 700. An open house will be held on June 29, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 to 7 p.m. For more information, go to the website at ezallergy.net, or call 724.655.3000 to schedule your appointment today. You can also check out their booth at Peters Township Community Day on June 24. Dr. Skoner also is doing a free public educational seminar on July 13, at the Hilton Garden Inn Pittsburgh/Southpointe. Dinner is included and seating is limited, so RSVPs are required. Call 724.655.3000 for more information.

