



# WINTER ALLERGIES



Winter is fast approaching, and that has many people thinking of scarves, snowflakes, hot chocolate, and...allergies?

Freezing temperatures do bring an end to seasonal pollen allergies, but millions of people are still living with winter allergies. Certain allergens, like indoor molds, dust mites, and animal dander, tend to increase in the home this time of year. Furnaces help to circulate airborne dust that is shaken loose from those much-anticipated holiday decorations coming out of the basement or attic.

Are you experiencing itching eyes, coughing, sneezing, runny nose, or congestion? EZ Allergy, LLC won't leave you out in the cold! We are readily accepting new patients through the holiday winter season. We have two excellent providers to get you in quickly, and during convenient hours—even in the evenings! If you are unsure whether allergies are the cause of your symptoms, we offer needleless allergy testing and an accurate diagnosis within minutes in the office.

Whether an allergy diagnosis is brand new or you are a long-time suffering allergy veteran, we are ready to develop an individualized treatment plan. We can offer various forms of allergen immunotherapy, which we hope will reduce or eliminate your need for synthetic medications. We are particularly excited to offer you immunotherapy in the form of a small tablet that quickly dissolves under your tongue. This tablet is safe for children as young as 5 years of age and can be taken conveniently in the comfort of your own home.

Allergy is a chronic or long-term condition. Many allergy patients forget what it feels like to be well, or symptom free. Allergen immunotherapy, unlike medications, is a natural long-term way to both treat and prevent allergies. This benefits you in symptom control and feeling better, but even more importantly in preventing the development of other allergies or asthma. Medications, on the other hand, are man-made, and are used for short-term symptom control rather than prevention or real treatment. Many people, including children, also suffer side effects—some life threatening—from these medications.

Allergy sufferers who also have asthma should be aware that asthma symptoms can also become worse in the winter, and at EZ Allergy your asthma needs are also very important to us! Asthma symptoms can worsen due to cold and flu season, cold air outside, warm fires in fireplaces inside, and increased indoor allergens like we discussed previously. We diagnose and monitor our asthma patients with both spirometry and exhaled nitric oxide. Spirometry is commonly used in primary care, allergy and pulmonary offices to measure lung function. It specifically measures the amount and speed of air that can be inhaled and exhaled. FeNO, or exhaled nitric oxide, is a much newer test available for our patients. It predicts the likelihood of inhaled steroid responsiveness, and can measure the inflammation in a person's airways. This can help accurately diagnose asthma, prevent asthma exacerbations, and minimize the use of unnecessary steroids.

EZ Allergy is a brand-new experience, not only for my patients but for myself as well. I graduated from Duquesne University with my master's degree in physician assistant studies and a bachelor's degree

in health sciences. Unexpectedly my career began in the world of allergy, and I have enjoyed seven years caring for adult and pediatric patients. Since joining the EZ Allergy family this summer, I have come to appreciate just how much this practice exists for you, the patient. EZ Allergy focuses on a patient's individual needs and preferences, and responds in a timely and professional manner. There are several unique aspects that EZ Allergy has to offer as opposed to my previous experience in allergy. EZ Allergy primarily offers convenient, at home, immunotherapy by way of a tablet under the tongue, as opposed to the in-office injections. We also diagnose and manage your asthma by not only spirometry, but exhaled nitric oxide as well. And most importantly, in my opinion, we value you, our patient, and your time above anything else. We offer appointments within the same day or week if available, and schedule in the morning, through lunch hours, and into the evenings as well. We diagnose and manage allergy and asthma, as well as care for asthma exacerbations, coughs, colds, and sinus infections. We get you in, cared for, and back out so that you can continue caring for your family and excelling in your career. I look forward to caring for you and seeing you join the EZ Allergy family.

This **Industry Insight** was written by Amanda Hofmann.

Amanda Hofmann is a board certified Physician Assistant who has been working in the specialty of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology for the last seven years. She graduated from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA in 2009 with her Bachelor of Health Sciences and in 2010 with her Master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies. Amanda joined the EZ Allergy family in May 2017. Amanda joined the American Academy of Physician Assistants in Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (AAPA-AAI) in 2013 and began working with the Board of Directors in 2014. Amanda is currently on the board of directors, serving as immediate past president. Amanda has served on advisory board committees for Sunovion Pharmaceuticals, MEDA Pharmaceuticals (now Mylan), and Circassia Pharmaceuticals. Amanda is also a member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants (PSPA), and the Greater Pittsburgh Allergy, Asthma, Immunology Society (GPAAIS).

Amanda enjoys opportunities to get involved, gain experience, and further her development, personally and professionally. Amanda studied abroad in the healthcare systems of Budapest, Hungary, and Cape Town, South Africa. She also spent six weeks in Liberia, Africa for her OB/GYN clinical externship. She has been a member of the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority since 2006, holding numerous leadership positions within the chapter, and within the Greek community on Duquesne's campus. Amanda became an advisor to the chapter at Duquesne in 2011 and still holds that position today.

Amanda and her husband Allen have two English Mastiffs, Zeus and Roman, and a one year old son, Landry. Amanda enjoys cooking, traveling, and baseball.



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