



1-877-604-8366
www.dermatologyforanimals.com

Sublingual vs. Injectable

After intradermal allergy testing, you will choose between injectable immunotherapy and sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT). While there is generally no wrong choice, there are some differences that may influence your decision.

Sublingual (under the tongue) desensitization has been used to relieve humans who suffer from allergies for decades, and is now available in veterinary medicine for animals. There are several advantages for using SLIT in animals. The first major advantage is being a more simple process compared to allergy injections. After allergy testing is performed, the product (allergen) is prepared and the pet owner simply pumps one small dose under the tongue behind the lower front teeth (incisors), or in the side of the mouth. Because the allergens are formulated in glycerin which has a sweet flavor, many animals look forward to receiving their treatment. Another potential advantage SLIT has over injections is that there may be an improved response or success with SLIT due to differences in how the body processes the allergens. Even if an allergic individual has failed to improve from allergy injections, the sublingual method may still be effective. An additional advantage of SLIT is safety. Even the most allergic patients who cannot tolerate an allergy injection can safely receive allergy drops, which has also been the case in human medicine. If side effects to SLIT are seen, it is usually mouth or face itching which resolves within minutes.

Injectable desensitization is a subcutaneous (under the skin) injection that we teach you to administer at home. The injection is quite simple to administer due to the small amount of liquid that is required each time. The largest advantage of injectable desensitization is that it may be simpler for some pet owners due to the less frequent need for administration. While SLIT initially needs to be given daily, injectable allergens are initially administered weekly and less frequently as time goes on. Side effects of injectable immunotherapy are rare but include hives, difficulty breathing, vomiting, and weakness. If a reaction does occur, a change in the dose or frequency may be required.

As with most allergy patients, the perfect recipe of allergens and frequency of sublingual drops or injections can sometimes require “fine-tuning” to achieve the best outcome. We always encourage owners to monitor their pet carefully over the course of time to determine if certain months or seasons are worse than others. This can be useful as we continue to find the correct allergy mix for each individual patient.