



Effective Health Care

Sublingual and Subcutaneous Immunotherapy Nomination Summary Document

Results of Topic Selection Process & Next Steps

- Sublingual and subcutaneous immunotherapy will go forward for refinement as a systematic review. The scope of this topic, including populations, interventions, comparators, and outcomes, will be further developed in the refinement phase.
- When key questions have been drafted, they will be posted on the AHRQ Web site and open for public comment. To sign up for notification when this and other Effective Health Care (EHC) Program topics are posted for public comment, please go to <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/join-the-email-list1/>.

Topic Description

Nominator: Organization

Nomination Summary: The nominator is interested in the effectiveness of sublingual immunotherapy to improve health outcomes and lower health care utilization.

Population(s): Patients with known allergic disease; subgroups of interest include minorities, inner-city populations, and autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) patients

Intervention(s): Sublingual immunotherapy

Comparator(s): No immunotherapy, subcutaneous immunotherapy, allergen avoidance, environmental controls, and/or pharmacotherapy

Outcome(s): Prevention of the onset of asthma and additional sensitivities; significant reductions in symptoms, medication use and unplanned health utilization; improvements in quality of life

Key Questions from Nominator:

1. For patients with allergic disease, what is the comparative effectiveness of improving health outcomes and lowering healthcare utilization by treating their disease with sublingual immunotherapy (allergy drops taken under the tongue) as opposed to not receiving any kind of disease modifying immunotherapy, or relying only on allergen avoidance, environmental controls and pharmacotherapy?

Considerations

- The topic meets all EHC Program selection criteria. (For more information, see <http://effectivehealthcare.ahrq.gov/index.cfm/submit-a-suggestion-for-research/how-are-research-topics-chosen/>.)
- Immunotherapy is a method of reducing sensitivity to a given allergen by repeated administration of a dose of that allergen. Patients benefit by improved allergic symptoms that do not respond to standard pharmacotherapy or allergen avoidance. Sublingual immunotherapy is an alternative for patients who require subcutaneous immunotherapy (injections) to treat allergic disease.
- The scope of this topic was expanded to include an evaluation of the subcutaneous administration of immunotherapy as well as standard medical management, including pharmacotherapy and environmental control, as comparators. Additionally, there may be some focus on the efficacy of subcutaneous immunotherapy in isolation. Potential harms will also be important to address.