

A Paradigm Shift in Allergen Immunotherapy in this Time of the Pandemic



James Windford R. Gelaga¹

ABSTRACT

Allergen-specific immunotherapy has been used for over 100 years as a desensitizing therapy for allergic diseases like asthma, allergic rhinitis, allergic conjunctivitis and atopic dermatitis among patients with aeroallergen sensitivity and represents the potentially curative and specific method of treatment. Route selection varies considerably depending on several factors, including vaccine availability or approval, location, cost, patient's characteristics or the preference of the patient and the physician. Subcutaneous injection and oral immunotherapy are the methods that are available at present. Subcutaneous injections are done by the allergist in a clinic while oral immunotherapy is taken by patients themselves in the comfort of their homes. At the start of the Covid 19 pandemic wherein it is not safe for the allergists nor the patients to have a face to face encounter, the oral method is a safer alternative without compromising the treatment goal.

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. James Windford R. Gelaga completed his medical degree at the age of 23 at Cebu Doctors' University College of Medicine in Cebu City, Philippines. He finished his pediatric residency training at Cebu Doctors' University Hospital and had his fellowship training in Allergy, Asthma and Clinical Immunology at University of Santo Tomas Manila, Philippines. He is currently a Diplomate of the Philippine Pediatric Society and Philippine Society of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. A member of the Occupational Allergy and Immunotherapy Council of the Philippine Society of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. He is currently a practicing allergist in the Philippines.

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¹ Philippine Society of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, Philippine Pediatric Society, Cebu Doctors' University Hospital, Philippines

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