

## HELP & ADVICE

### Conclusion

The therapy scheme serves as a guideline – each animal reacts individually. Thus, adjustments for every patient may become necessary. Observe your animal carefully and thus assist your vet to adjust the therapy scheme specifically for your pet. **An allergy is a chronic disease, but most cases (more than 70 %) can be adequately controlled with ASIT!** Even if your animal responds very well to the therapy, there may be periods when additional treatment is required. However, with the help of ASIT, these phases may be shorter and less frequent.

**“4Paws is an app we have developed for vets & pet owners, which helps in following the respective treatment plan by sending reminders.”**

– Dr Elisabeth Müller –

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### Quick reference

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Handed out directly from your vet



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### Service

This info folder and other useful information is provided **on our website** [www.laboklin.com](http://www.laboklin.com). Under the heading “Vetinfo – Folder Help & Advice” you can read and download this information.



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## Lab profile

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Type: Laboratory for clinical diagnostics  
Qualifications: One of the leading laboratories in Europe  
Operating in: Europe, Asia, Arabian Peninsula  
Team: Over one hundred specialists and veterinarians  
Specialty: Research projects at the federal level

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## ALLERGEN-SPECIFIC IMMUNOTHERAPY IN DOGS AND CATS



## HELP & ADVICE

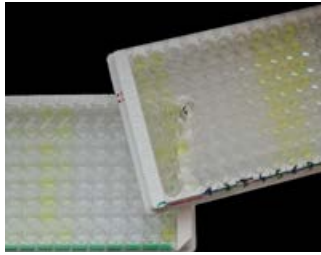
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by your vet and LABOKLIN

## For which diseases is allergen-specific immunotherapy (ASIT, hyposensitisation) the most appropriate therapy?

Atopic dermatitis: this is an allergy to grass, herb, and tree pollens, house dust mites, moulds, insects, or animal hair or dander. Animals with a hereditary predisposition for this disease develop allergic reactions to the triggering substances (allergens) so-called antibodies of the IgE-class. Our pets react in the case of atopy with different allergic reactions, such as pruritus with or without skin changes or allergic asthma (especially in cats). Your vet has tested your pet to determine the allergens by a skin test or blood test. Then you know exactly which substances your animal is sensitised to.

## What exactly is an allergen-specific immunotherapy (ASIT)?

ASIT is the gradual reduction of an allergen-specific, IgE-mediated reaction alert of the body to react through regular subcutaneous injections of the triggering allergen in slowly increasing concentrations.



## What does that mean in concrete terms?

A therapeutic solution is prepared specifically for your animal from those allergens to which the animal has reacted positively in the allergy test (precondition: good correlation with medical history and clinical symptoms). This process can take up to 3 weeks. By injecting these allergens (under the skin) in gradually increasing quantities and concentrations, an attempt is made to achieve tolerance of the body to these allergens. This is successful in 70 – 80 % of the cases.

## Application

ASIT is always recommended if the animal's symptoms last over 3 – 4 months per year.

At the beginning of the therapy, 2 vials of different concentrations are required.

## The following instructions must be observed:

- The subcutaneous injections are administered once a week in the beginning, followed by 2-, 3- or 4-weekly intervals.



- These intervals should be strictly adhered to. If a single injection has been forgotten (no longer than one week), the treatment regime can be continued without any problems according to the therapy schedule.
- During the first injection of each new vial, the animal should be monitored for approx. 30 – 60 minutes due to possible adverse reactions (which occur only very rarely).
- No food should be given within one hour before and after the injection.
- Substantial physical exertion (long walks, romping around) should be avoided in the first few hours after the injection.
- Vaccinations should not be carried out on the same day as the ASIT.
- The vials need to be stored in a refrigerator.
- The repeat order for maintenance therapy must be made early to avoid unwanted relapses.

## Procedure of therapy

At the beginning of the therapy, sometimes an additional treatment with other drugs, e.g. cortisone, is necessary so that the pet shows less itching. Nevertheless, you should try to use other drugs as few as possible because the symptoms of your animal are used to control the success of the ASIT. If you use too much additional medication, it is possible that a necessary adaptation of the dosage plan is masked.

The injections should be given at regular intervals with increasing dosage. In more than 70 % of cases, ASIT shows success rates. However, initially, it is not predictable if your animal belongs to the more extensive group of success or if it, unfortunately, belongs to the smaller group that does not show any clinical improvement with this kind of therapy. You should be patient, though: some animals show an improvement after a few weeks, but a final assessment of treatment can be done only after one year.

## What to do if ...

### ... your animal does not respond well to the ASIT, or the symptoms worsen after initial success?

Consult your vet – it could be an additional disease. This could be a simple flea infestation, a

secondary bacterial infection, an infestation with mites, an additional food allergy, or even a completely new disease. However, it may also be necessary to change the interval, the concentration, or sometimes even the composition of the ASIT.

### ... with increasingly higher dosage immediately or the day after the injection, symptoms of the disease become more severe again?

Discuss this with your vet. Often, the following dosage must be reduced two steps back (e. g., from 0.7 to 0.3 ml). Subsequently, a slow increase can be attempted again. If symptoms occur again immediately, the dosage is reduced again by one level. This dose can be considered as an individually detected maintenance dosage for this animal.

### ... the itchiness starts again directly before the next injection?

Talk to your vet. Sometimes, the interval needs to be decreased.

### ... your animal responds well to ASIT?

You should not quit therapy but maintain it as a lifelong treatment! However, you can extend the intervals between the injections and shorten them again if necessary. If your pet



responds well to the therapy and you interrupt the ASIT, it will slowly – but surely – lead to a recurrence of the symptoms, as an allergy can not be cured. If you have stopped therapy for a more extended period, you often need to restart with ASIT. The allergy testing must also be performed again, as the spectrum may have changed, especially after a more prolonged interruption. Furthermore, our experience and data show that after an abandonment of therapy, success rates are not as favourable as when treatment began.

