

## BRANFORD PEDIATRICS & ALLERGY, P.C.

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### IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW WHEN BEGINNING VENOM SHOTS

1. A total of a **3-5 year course** of venom immunotherapy (shots) is recommended for most people unless there is a history of anaphylaxis to bee sting, in which case the recommendation is indefinite venom shots.
2. Once venom shots are begun, it is very important to stay with the course and not have interruptions.
3. Venom immunotherapy begins with a building phase of **weekly shots for 7 weeks**, then moves to every 2 weeks for one visit, then every 3 weeks for one visit and then every 4 weeks for the rest of the first year. The shots are every 6 weeks in the second year and then every 8 weeks in the third year.
4. The first 2 weeks of venom shots have 3 sets of shots (of increasing dosage) **for each type of insect**. Each shot is separated by 20-30 minutes. Weeks 3 through 5 have 2 sets of shots and from week 6 on there is only 1 set of shots. There is always a 30 minute wait after the last shot for safety purposes.
5. A patient over 16 years of age may come alone, however the wait will be 45 minutes.
6. When doing weekly shots, they do not have to be on the same day each week as long as there are at least 48 hours between shots.
7. You should always carry the auto-injectable epinephrine to each visit and for 2 hours following the visit.
8. Asthma must be well-controlled at the time of the allergy shot; therefore there must be no asthma symptoms and no rescue inhaler use (albuterol or Xopenex) for the prior 48 hours. This is to reduce the risk of systemic reaction. This does not include inhaler use prior to exercise or sports.
9. Patients should put 2 hours between a venom shot and strenuous activity or exercise.
10. Appointments for venom shots should be made in advance with Susan Judge, the receptionist for the allergy department, at 203-481-0566.