**Is It Worth It to Refer to an Allergist?**

A primary care provider (PCP) is the go-to professional when people have health-related issues—any and *every* health-related issue. From preventive care to diagnosing and managing chronic conditions like hypertension or diabetes to managing acute conditions like heart disease, PCPs have a full plate. Repeated visits by patients with unresolved allergy or asthma symptoms don’t need to add to the burden. For those patients, it’s time to refer to a board-certified, fellowship-trained allergist.

***Referring to an allergist can help end the cycle of suffering***

There are 40-50 million people suffering from allergies or asthma in the United States. With so many people dealing with these health concerns, you'd think treatment would be easy to access and over-the-counter medications would be effective. But that is typically not the case. Even with help from their PCPs, many people continue to suffer from asthma or allergies that go untreated or uncontrolled. When that’s the case, it’s time for an allergist.

***Allergists are asthma experts***

Asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases among children and adults, and it cannot be cured. When managed effectively by a highly trained specialist, asthma does not have to be life-threatening or disabling. Board-certified, fellowship-trained allergists understand the factors that influence the course of asthma, methods to assess triggers and levels of control and new targets for intervention. By partnering with an allergist, PCPs can help their asthma patients experience:

• Fewer emergency care visits

• Fewer hospitalizations

• Fewer days in the hospital

• Fewer sick care office visits

• Fewer days missed from work or school

• Increased productivity in their work and personal lives

• Greater satisfaction with their care

• Improved quality of life (QoL)

***Allergists can help patients with eczema***

Eczema, also known as atopic dermatitis, affects 10-20% of children and 1-3% of adults. The path to an eczema diagnosis can be a long one, and finding the right treatment can take even longer with a lot of trial and error. Allergists are specially trained to treat skin conditions, such as eczema, which are often related to an allergic response. A board-certified, fellowship-trained allergist can test to identify triggers and recommend treatments to help manage eczema.These tests can be used to help identify food, seasonal or year-round allergies that may be contributing to symptoms.Then, the allergist develops a treatment plan that may include medications or immunotherapy. Because eczema can come and go, partnering with an allergist can help PCPs gain and maintain control over what can be a painful, ongoing condition for their patients.

***Why do PCPs refer to board-certified, fellowship-trained allergists?***

After a residency in internal medicine or pediatrics, allergists spend an extra two to three years in focused fellowship training to specialize in allergic conditions. A fellowship-trained allergist’s sole focus is treating allergic conditions**.**

Board certification is an extra step many physicians complete to show expertise and competence in treating allergic disorders. The American Board of Medical Specialties ONLY recognizes board certification in allergy for physicians who have completed the above fellowship training, passed the certification exam and participate in the current maintenance of the certification process.

[Watch John C. McGinley](https://vimeo.com/745071333/7dd8183a63) as he shows us how suffering with unresolved symptoms from allergies and asthma is no picnic. By partnering with a board-certified, fellowship-trained allergist, PCPs can prescribe relief for their patients.