

About the Khoo Teck Puat – National University Children's Medical Institute (KTP-NUCMI)

The KTP-NUCMI is the paediatric arm of the National University Hospital and comprises the Departments of Paediatrics, Paediatric Surgery and Neonatology. We provide comprehensive and specialised medical and surgical services for newborns, children and adolescents. NUH is the only hospital in Singapore that offers paediatric kidney and liver transplant programmes. Through a generous gift from the Estate of Khoo Teck Puat, we have set up an integrated outpatient facility with medical, diagnostic and rehabilitation services.

For more information about us, visit www.nuh.com.sg/ktp-nucmi.

Contact Us

24-hour Children's Emergency

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone F, Level 1

General Enquiry: +65 6772 5000

KTP-NUCMI

Location: NUH Main Building, Zone E, Level 2

(Accessible via Kent Ridge Wing, Zone C, Level 2, Lift Lobby C)

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri), 8.30am – 12.30pm (Sat)

General Enquiry: +65 6772 5736

Appointment Line: +65 6908 2222

Email: ktpnucmi_appt@nuhs.edu.sg

9a Viva-University Children's Cancer Centre

Location: NUH Medical Centre, Zone B, Level 9

Operating Hours: 8am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6772 5030

Fax: +65 6872 4314

Email: cbccappt@nuhs.edu.sg

NUH Children's Urgent Care Clinic @ Bukit Panjang

Location: Junction 10, 1 Woodlands Road, #01-22, Singapore 677899

Operating Hours: 9am – 11pm daily (including public holidays)

General Enquiry: +65 6219 1538

Email: childrenucc@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/ucc

NUH Child Development Unit @ JMC

Location: Jurong Medical Centre, 60 Jurong West Central 3, Level 2, Singapore 648346

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6665 2530/2531

Fax: +65 6665 0158

Email: cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/cdu

NUH Child Development Unit @ Keat Hong

Location: Keat Hong Community Club, 2 Choa Chu Kang Loop, #03-01, Singapore 689687

Operating Hours: 8.30am – 5.30pm (Mon to Fri)

Appointment Line: +65 6769 4537/4637

Fax: +65 6665 0158

Email: cdu@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg/cdu

National University Hospital

Location: 5 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 119074

Tel: +65 6908 2222

Email: contactus@nuhs.edu.sg

Website: www.nuh.com.sg



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Information is correct at the time of printing (November 2022) and subject to revision without prior notice.

Oral Immunotherapy for Food Allergy



Introduction to Food Allergy and Avoidance

Food allergy is a common condition in children. Allergic reactions to the food can be severe or life-threatening especially if it is a high-risk food such as peanut or tree nuts. Although the standard advice is to try your best to avoid letting your child eat the food, avoidance is difficult.

There are two problems with avoidance:

1. Many of these food allergens are common and easily hidden inside other food, including baked and processed food bought at supermarkets. This means that accidental ingestion of the food allergen can occur even with the most careful parents and there may be a risk of allergic reactions. Children will eat at their friends' birthday parties, school celebrations, camping trips and sometimes accept treats from their friends without knowing what is inside. As they get older, they become more adventurous and the risk increases even more.
2. The psychological stress of being perpetually on your guard with every meal, food purchase and trip for many years wears down the parents as well as the child. A phobia of the food can develop and this can be unhealthy in the long-term for everyone.

Immunotherapy aims to address these two problems.

What is Immunotherapy?

Immunotherapy is a treatment where the child's body is "taught" to slowly accept the allergen without having a reaction.

The aim of this is to allow the child to take the food allergen – even accidentally – in reasonable amounts without having any problems. This will greatly decrease the risk of an accidental allergic reaction as well as remove the psychological stress of having to watch for even tiny amounts of the food allergen all the time.

Immunotherapy achieves this by having the child take precisely-measured amounts of the food allergen, starting with a tiny dose. This dose is slowly increased over time. This increases the amount the child can ingest without getting problems. This requires close cooperation between our Paediatric Allergy Team, the child's parents and the child.

The child's parents must adhere strictly to the instructions of the Paediatric Allergy Team, otherwise the child may have severe reactions and the treatment can fail.

What are the commitments that I need to make for this Immunotherapy?

Immunotherapy takes place over many months. The first step is a food challenge. This involves giving the child precise amounts of the food allergen in slowly increasing doses.

The purpose of this is to:

- Confirm the child still has the food allergy
- Obtain the starting dose of the Immunotherapy

The child then needs to take the dose of allergen our Paediatric Allergy Team has measured out once a day. For the first dose and once every 2 weeks (this may vary slightly, occasionally every 3 to 4 weeks depending on the individual), the child will need to take a higher dose of the allergen. This is called an updose.

All updoes are to be performed in the Paediatric Day Therapy Centre at the National University Hospital under observation of our medical staff. This is because they carry a higher risk of an allergic reaction. Updoes take a total of about 2.5 hours including observation. After which, the child can go home if there are no reactions.

Thereafter, the daily dose will be taken at home under supervision of a parent until the next updose. There are precautions to be taken (please refer to the FAQ sheet on daily dosing). Our Paediatric Allergy Team will work closely with the parent to ensure that the parent has an Anaphylaxis Action Plan, an emergency kit and the training to use it properly in the event of a reaction. This is also covered in the FAQ sheet.

Is Immunotherapy a cure for food allergy?

Immunotherapy does not cure food allergy. Instead, it makes it less likely for the child to have an allergic reaction if he or she is accidentally exposed to the food allergen. The child will have to take that food intermittently to continue reaping the benefits after the Immunotherapy is complete.

If the food intake is stopped, the effects of the Immunotherapy may wear off over time and the child's risk of allergic reactions will return. Please discuss this with our paediatrician who specialises in allergy if you need more clarification.

For more information, please email us at allergy_kids@nuhs.edu.sg.

Upon completion of the Immunotherapy, the child will need to take the food allergen intermittently at least twice a week. Our paediatrician who specialises in allergy will discuss the details with you.