

ALEX² BUILDING ALLERGY PUZZLES



ARE YOU PUZZLED BY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS?

- Hives, itchy skin, eczema (rash)?
- Red, itchy, watery eyes?
- Runny, blocked nose, sneezing?
- Tingling, itchy mouth or lips?
- Swelling of the lips, face, tongue or other parts of the body?
- Wheezing, coughing?
- Diarrhoea or vomiting?

You could have an underlying allergy.



WHAT IS AN ALLERGY?

Allergies are chronic conditions in which your body's immune system reacts to harmless substances (proteins) as if they were threats. These substances (proteins) are also known as allergens and can be found in pollen, house dust mites, pets, insects, moulds and food.

Many allergies develop during childhood, but you can develop an allergy or a different and additional allergy at any stage of your life. You can be allergic to only one allergen or to many. If allergies are neglected, it could put you at risk of developing complications like allergic asthma.

Appropriate, early treatment can improve your quality of life, prevent complications and even prevent new allergies. Some allergic reactions can be severe, called anaphylaxis, and can be life-threatening. It is important to identify the allergen causing the severe allergic reaction, in order to manage it and practice active avoidance.

WHAT IS IGE?

Immunoglobulin E (IgE) is a type of antibody that is formed to fight parasitic infections. Sometimes your body becomes confused and creates IgE to harmless substances (allergens). An allergen specific IgE antibody may cause an immediate type of allergic reaction.



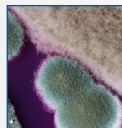
Pollen



House dust mite



Pets



Mould

An allergen is like a puzzle consisting of different puzzle pieces (components) and each piece plays a role in your symptoms and management. It is thus crucial to know the puzzle piece (component) to which you are allergic.



Milk



Eggs



Peanuts & tree nuts



Fish & seafood

HOW CAN ALEX² BUILD THE ALLERGY PUZZLE?

ALEX² is a comprehensive allergy panel consisting of close to 300 allergens, including inhalants, food allergens and insect venom. This test uses the latest technology to test for specific IgE antibodies on a range of the most relevant allergen sources (excluding drug allergies).

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ALEX² is like a box of different puzzle pieces. It contains the most relevant pieces of an allergen, known as molecular components. Identifying these pieces supports a better understanding of cross-reactivity and risk assessment for true food allergies and will help guide directed dietary advice. A molecular component may also guide allergen-specific immunotherapy.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF ALEX²?

A small amount of blood is needed to test many allergens at once. It contains the most important molecular allergens, helping to build your allergy puzzle in a comprehensive manner.

PUZZLING QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE ANSWERED BY ALEX²

- Am I truly allergic to the dog, or is it the cat?
- Am I only allergic to male dogs?
- Can I become tolerant to bee venom by allergy immunotherapy and avoid life-long anxiety and expensive epipens?
- Should I follow a gluten-free diet?
- Should I avoid all milk-containing products or can I eat a muffin?
- Must I replace carpets with tiles and invest in a good vacuum cleaner?
.... and much more.

ALEX² MAY ALSO PREDICT RISK

Food allergies may be life-threatening. Knowing your molecular components may predict the severity of reactions and help forecast whether the allergy can be outgrown.

Some of these pieces (molecular allergens) are very tough and resistant to heat, whereas others could be destroyed by heating and cooking. For instance, you may not eat scrambled eggs, but having a piece of cake could be perfectly safe.

SOLVING CROSS-REACTIVITY

Did you know that your pollen allergy could also cause an allergy to plant-based foods? This is known as Pollen-Food Allergy Syndrome (PFAS) or Oral Allergy Syndrome and happens when your body's immune system recognises a small piece (component) of the pollen allergen which is structurally similar to pieces (components) in certain plant-based foods. You may experience oral symptoms such as an itchy and/or swollen mouth, scratchy throat and stomach discomfort.

These shared allergens (cross-reactive components) may cause positive allergy tests for foods such as wheat, soy and peanut, when the pollen allergy test is also positive. This result does not necessarily mean that you have a food allergy. It may merely represent the presence of IgE antibodies against pollen allergen components that may also be present in plant-based foods. ALEX² builds this allergy puzzle to understand your allergies.

FINDING A LONG-TERM SOLUTION

It is essential that your healthcare practitioner makes the final diagnosis and provides advice on management.

Allergen specific immunotherapy can also be useful to help train your immune system to not overreact to the culprit allergen. Such therapy is an option but should be discussed with your healthcare practitioner.

Children tend to outgrow allergies and new allergies may also develop over time. Retesting may therefore be of value in certain cases.

BUILD YOUR ALLERGY PUZZLE WITH ALEX² IN A FEW STEPS

1. A blood sample must be collected. Blood can be collected by your doctor (if this service is available at his/her rooms) or at the Ampath care centre nearest you. Only a small volume of blood is needed.
2. Your blood sample is analysed in the laboratory using the newest technology in allergy diagnostics.
3. Your ALEX² test result is reported in an individualised and easy-to-understand manner. This report will be sent to both you and/or your healthcare practitioner*.
4. This test result will help your doctor to make an accurate diagnosis and guide you on further management.



AMPATH APP

Your test results are available to you through our easy-to-use Ampath App

*Certain test results require an explanation by your doctor first and will only be available on the App later.

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