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**CHAPTER 5: PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

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**Allergy Testing [and Allergen Immunotherapy](#)**

Allergy Testing describes the performance and evaluation of selective cutaneous and mucous membrane tests in correlation with the history, physical examination, and other observations of the [recipientbeneficiaries](#).

**Testing for Allergies**

Only children and adults who have symptoms that suggest they have an allergic disease should be tested for allergies. Allergy symptoms can include:

- Respiratory symptoms: itchy eyes, nose, or throat, nasal congestion, runny nose, watery eyes, chest congestion or wheezing;
- Skin symptoms: hives, generalized itchiness or atopic dermatitis; and
- Other symptoms: anaphylaxis (severe life-threatening allergic reactions) or abdominal symptoms (cramping, diarrhea) that consistently follow particular foods or stinging insect reactions (other than large local swelling at the sting site).

**Allergen Immunotherapy**

Allergen immunotherapy is a vaccination program that increases immunity to allergens that trigger allergy symptoms. Allergen immunotherapy involves administering increasing amounts of an allergen to a [recipientbeneficiary](#) over a period of time. The method of administration and dosage administered should be included in the [recipientbeneficiary](#)'s record. Indications for immunotherapy are determined by appropriate diagnostic procedures and clinical judgment.

**Allergen Immunotherapy Treatment**

Allergen immunotherapy is only recommended for allergic asthma, allergic rhinitis and conjunctivitis, and stinging insect allergy. Immunotherapy for food allergies is not recommended. Decisions to initiate immunotherapy should be based on severity of allergy symptoms, other possible treatment options, and cost of treatment options.

Five years of age is the youngest recommended age to begin immunotherapy. There is no upper age limit for receiving immunotherapy. However, before initiating immunotherapy in an older person, consideration must be given to other common medical conditions that could make immunotherapy more risky.

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**Allergy Testing and Allergen Immunotherapy Billing**

When billing for allergy testing and allergen immunotherapy, providers are to use the most appropriate and inclusive *Current Procedural Terminology* (CPT) codes that describe the services provided. Unless otherwise listed, Louisiana Medicaid uses the definitions and criteria found in the CPT Manual.

The number of allergy tests performed should be judicious and dependent upon the history, physical findings, and clinical judgment of the provider. All ~~recipient~~beneficiaries should not necessarily receive the same test or number of tests.

The procedure codes used for allergen immunotherapy include the necessary professional services associated with this therapy which includes the monitoring of the injection site and observation of the ~~recipient~~beneficiary to adverse reactions. Office visit codes may be billed in addition to immunotherapy only if other significant identifiable services are provided at that time.