Asthma is a progressive inflammatory disease in which allergies are a cause most of the time. Medications are helpful and necessary but they do not always do enough. As a result, nearly all asthma patients experience a daily variability in asthma symptoms which go unreported or unrecognized. The 2007 NIH Asthma guidelines recognize the need and recommend options for a more comprehensive management of asthma.

One of these options is the utilization of in vitro specific IgE testing to reliably determine sensitivity to allergens to which the patient is exposed. Specific IgE blood test results tell you exactly what patients are sensitive to and help guide a practical approach of targeting exposure reduction to specific sensitivities. Following simple and practical exposure reduction techniques (along with medications) allow for a much more comprehensive management of asthma and a better chance of symptom resolution.

Approximately 60% of adults and 90% of children with asthma have IgE-mediated sensitivities. Allergic asthma consists of a complex and insidious allergic inflammatory process that results in symptoms and subsequent medications. The NIH recommends complete symptom management and studies indicate that medications are usually not able to achieve this lofty goal on their own.

Well-designed studies show that:

* Targeted exposure reduction can dramatically reduce hours of wheezing and doses of medication.
* Targeted exposure reduction produces symptom improvement comparable to that achieved with pharmacotherapy.
* Practical targeted exposure reduction techniques can produce dramatic results even in very difficult environments (i.e. inner city), and produce an effect similar to inhaled corticosteroid therapy.

To help you address this important piece of asthma management, Alverno Clinical Laboratories now offers Specific IgE testing performed onsite. Alverno utilizes third generation ImmunoCap® technology, a quantitative assay far superior to earlier RAST technology. In addition, Alverno offers several allergen profiles to aid in the diagnosis and management of allergic conditions. These profiles will report the sensitization level for each included allergen. In combination with a thorough patient history and physical examination, the test results provide objective, quantifiable evidence to allow you to rule atopy in or out, identify allergic triggers that might cause asthma symptoms and employ targeted allergen reduction measures.

A regional respiratory disease profile is available for use in adults and school-aged children with suspected allergic rhinitis and/or asthma. This profile includes indoor and outdoor allergens most prevalent in your region in addition to total IgE. The profile provides a 95% positive predictive value for allergen confirmation.

The childhood allergy profile is recommended for children ages 3 months to 3 years of age. This profile contains the 15 most common food and indoor environmental allergens in addition to total IgE.

The food allergy profile includes 12 key food allergens that have been selected to reflect common food atopy in adults and children.

For allergic asthma, the Respiratory Disease Panel will help you identify the allergic triggers. If the results are negative, the clinician can then focus on non-allergic triggers. Specific IgE blood test results guide asthma management including avoidance, medication selection, and appropriate referral.

For more information about laboratory allergy testing, contact Alverno at 800-937-5521 today!

References