

The Drug Allergy and Desensitization Program

The Drug Allergy and Desensitization Program at Nyack Hospital is a comprehensive program performed by expert Allergy and Immunology specialists in a safe, closely monitored, and coordinated-care environment. Nyack Hospital established the first aspirin desensitization program in the Northeast and has since expanded the program to include evaluation and desensitization to other drugs such as chemotherapeutic agents and antibiotics. **The Drug Allergy and Desensitization Program at Nyack Hospital is one of the few drug allergy programs of its kind in the country and the only program in the Rockland, Westchester, and Bergen County areas.**

If an individual has a history of an allergic reaction to medication necessary to treat their illness, and there is no suitable alternative, our goal is to enable them to take the recommended medication through a comprehensive allergy evaluation and possible drug desensitization procedure.

Desensitization involves taking the drug in small increasing amounts until you can tolerate the needed dose safely. An Allergy-Immunology specialist will perform the procedure with a dedicated nurse in a closely monitored/intensive care setting.

For more information about The Drug Allergy and Desensitization Program and to set up a consultation, please call **845.353.9600**.

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A Member of the
Montefiore
HEALTH SYSTEM

160 North Midland Avenue, Nyack, New York 10960

The Drug Allergy and Desensitization Program | at Nyack Hospital



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Services

Evaluation and treatment is provided to patients who may have a life-threatening allergy to medication or possible adverse reactions to:

- Chemotherapy for various forms of cancer (Rituximab, cisplatin, oxaliplatin, and others)
- Antibiotics for various infectious diseases (Penicillin, sulfa, etc.)
- Aspirin for heart disease and Aspirin Exacerbated Respiratory Disease (AERD)—a chronic respiratory condition that includes asthma, nasal polyps, chronic inflammatory sinus disease, and adverse reactions to aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID)

- Anesthetic agents (Lidocaine, carbocaine, mepivacaine, etc.)
- Intravenous iron therapy for anemia
- Allopurinol
- Anti-convulsants
- Other Medications

What to Expect During Your Visit

Some allergic reactions to drugs—particularly rashes, hives, and asthma—can resemble certain diseases.

At your initial evaluation, our Allergy specialists will take a detailed history and perform a physical examination looking for signs of a drug reaction. We will need the following information:

- What drug do you suspect caused your reaction?
- When did you start taking the suspected medication, and have you stopped taking it?
- How long after you took the drug did you notice symptoms, and what did you experience?
- How long did your symptoms last, and what did you do to relieve them?
- What other medications, both prescription and over-the-counter, do you take?
- Do you also take herbal medications, vitamins, or supplements? Which ones?
- Have you had reactions to other drugs? What kind and when did they occur?

- If you can, bring the suspected drug with you, as well as any pictures of any rash or other physical symptoms associated with the reaction.
- If a drug allergy is suspected, our Allergy specialists may also recommend a skin test or a graded drug challenge, where you will be supervised by an Allergy specialist and trained medical staff as you take the drug suspected of triggering a reaction in a closely monitored setting. If your previous reaction was severe, the challenge may be performed in an intensive care unit.

Once your evaluation is completed, we will coordinate with your physicians to develop the best treatment plan for you.

Our Experts



Ma. Lourdes de Asis, MD, MPH, FAACAP

Director, Drug Allergy and Desensitization Program

Section Chief, Allergy and Immunology, Nyack Hospital

- **Sharon Yee, MD, MSc**

- **Candy Mercer, RN**

Nurse Manager, Infusion Unit

- **Gloria Porcelli, RPh**

Chemotherapy Pharmacist

- **Eileen Kay, RN**

Aspirin Allergy Nurse Coordinator