

Allergy Testing in Newfoundland and Labrador

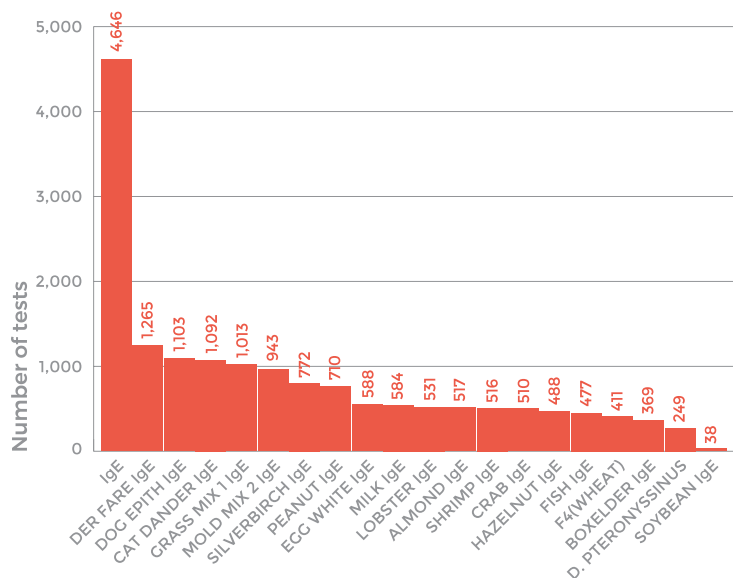
Choosing Wisely Canada Recommendation

Do not perform screening panels (IgE tests) for allergy without previous consideration of pertinent medical history.

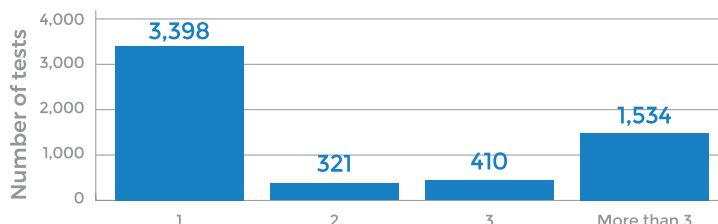
Practice Points

1. Most allergic reactions are immediate hypersensitivity reactions caused by IgE antibodies.
2. Common triggers include environmental allergens (pollens, pets, dust), food, venom and medications. Symptoms occur within minutes to two hours of exposure.
3. Symptoms of food allergy include cutaneous (e.g. hives), respiratory (e.g. wheeze), gastrointestinal (e.g. vomiting) and cardiovascular (e.g. hypotension). Allergy testing for foods may be associated with high rates of false positives, up to 50%.
4. Allergy testing includes skin prick testing and serum specific IgE to the given allergen. Skin prick testing is more sensitive than specific IgE testing. Specific IgE testing for environmental allergens is not necessary.
5. Allergy testing should only be ordered if the history is suggestive of an allergic reaction and only to allergens suspected on history.
6. Ordering more than three IgE tests at a time may be unnecessary.

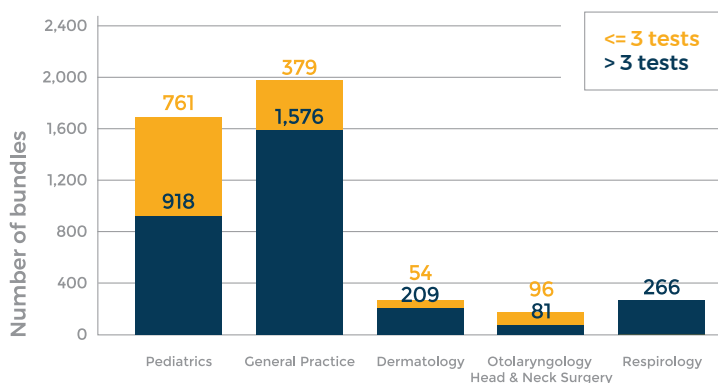
Number of orders for each test



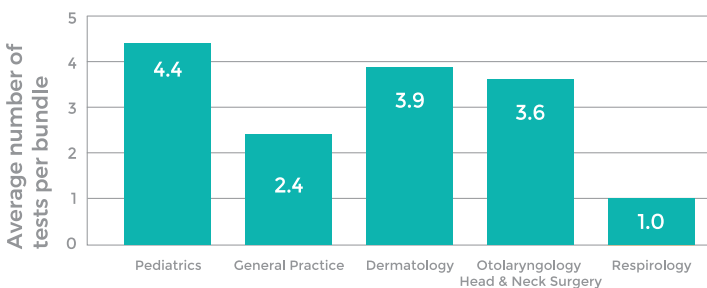
Number of Bundles by the Number of Tests per Bundle



Number of Bundles by Number of Tests per Bundle by Practicing Specialty



Average Number of Tests per Bundle by Practicing Speciality



Conclusions

1. Only order allergy testing if the history is suggestive of an allergic reaction and only to allergens suspected on history.
2. Ordering of more than three IgE tests per bundle, which may not be indicated, occurs most frequently in pediatrics.