

Your PBMC Allergist: Allergycare Par Excellence! (440 words)

An allergist/immunologist (commonly referred to as an allergist) is a physician specially trained to diagnose, treat and manage allergies, asthma and disorders involving the immune system. Peconic Bay Medical Center allergists are here to help you successfully manage your allergies and asthma through effective medical treatments. They are dedicated to helping you overcome discomfort and control your symptoms so you can live a normal and high-quality life.

What are allergies?

Allergies are among the most chronic conditions affecting people around the world. Your body's immune system is designed to protect you from harmful "invaders" such as bacteria and viruses. In the case of an allergy, the body mistakes a harmless substance for one of these invaders and releases histamine and other chemicals to try and eliminate it. This reaction causes allergy symptoms (usually in the nose, lungs, throat, sinuses, ears, lining of the stomach or on the skin). The provoking agent is called an "allergen." Usually this causes you to itch or sneeze or experience other manageable symptoms. However, in serious situations, allergies can cause a life-threatening reaction called anaphylaxis.

Allergists help your body overcome this sensitivity to allergens with injections or other treatments.

Common allergens include:

- Pollen
- Dust
- Food
- Insect stings
- Animal dander
- Mold
- Medications

What is asthma?

Asthma can be related to respiratory allergies or result from reactions to physical exercise or stress. This respiratory disorder involves inflamed airways in the lungs. With asthma, your bronchial tubes become swollen, causing the muscles around the airways to tighten. This makes it hard to breathe.

Symptoms of asthma include:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness

Allergy Stats

- A nationwide survey found that more than half (54.6%) of all U.S. citizens test positive to one or more allergens.
- In a recent survey, over 50% of homes had at least six detectable allergens present.
- Allergic diseases affect as many as 40 to 50 million Americans.
- About 27% of children who have a food allergy also have eczema or a skin allergy.

Asthma Stats

- Approximately 34.1 million Americans have been diagnosed with asthma by a health professional during their lifetime.
 - Asthma accounts for approximately 500,000 hospitalizations each year.
 - 13 million school days are missed each year due to asthma.
 - Asthma accounts for about 10.1 million missed work days for adults annually.
- (stats information from American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology, www.aaaai.org)

For more information on how Peconic Bay Medical Center can help you or to contact an allergist at PBMC, please [click here](#).