

ImmunoCAP Phadiatop – A Wonderful Diagnostics Tool for Atopy

Phadiatop can be performed irrespective of age and the patient's skin condition, current medications, disease activity, and pregnancy.



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Allergies are on the rise worldwide and especially so in India. It is estimated that one in four persons will experience some allergic manifestation in their lifetime. While allergy skin tests remain the standard diagnostics tools performed by specialists for evaluation of an allergic individual, ImmunoCAP Phadiatop test, which runs on Phadia Laboratory Systems and ImmunoCAP Technology (which it uses), is the gold standard in case of in vitro (blood) testing. It is based on the principle of cross-reactivity and co-sensitization and a small sample of blood is enough to test for the same. Total IgE has a sensitivity of only 50 percent and specificity of 80 percent and is not considered a good test for allergy evaluation as it is also raised in various other conditions such as parasitic infections and autoimmune diseases. In comparison, Phadiatop has more than 90 percent sensitivity and 89 percent specificity for allergy testing, which is quite comparable to allergy skin testing.

With India being a cost sensitive country, where patients pay out-of-pocket for most tests and for testing long lists of allergens on blood test panels are sometimes a big no, screening with the ImmunoCAP Phadiatop test when suspecting allergies becomes a smart idea. If a Phadiatop test is positive, the patient definitely has allergies to those common antigens, which are screened via this test and then symptoms and history-driven panels or single allergen tests can be ordered. But with its more than 90 percent sensitivity and 89 percent specificity, it is scientifically much better than total IgE screening for allergies. If the clinical findings strongly suggest allergies then direct testing with relevant panels or individual allergens is encouraged.

Phadiatop is a wonderful screening test to differentiate between atopy/non-atopy and

has been in use since 1986. It helps confirm or exclude atopic allergy with 90 percent accuracy. Phadiatop is recommended with its superior performance, which only measures allergen-specific IgE antibodies to common allergens and not the total amount where irrelevant IgE could be included. Phadiatop is a single blood test for measuring IgE (sensitization) with two age-dependent versions, Phadiatop – for older children (>5 years) and adults containing only common inhalant allergens. Those individuals with food allergy or allergy to more or less exotic pets like birds and guinea pigs are most often co-sensitized to common inhalants and hence get picked up as positive with Phadiatop. But patients having exclusive food allergy (nuts or seafood) without environmental allergy might not show up on Phadiatop. In such cases, specific nut or seafood allergen test or a nut or seafood mixImmunoCAP test is recommended by their specialists. Phadiatop infant is for children less than five years covering common five foods and several inhalant allergens. Phadiatop is a universal test as common allergens are in principle the same worldwide, such as dust mites, animal dander, pollen, and mold. Regional pollens often cross-react to a high degree within each group and so, selected ones work fine. Cut-off value for Phadiatop is 0.35 PAU/l and many laboratories use units such as Ku/l to avoid any confusion; however, this is not 100 percent correct but should not lead to any clinical issues and thus may be accepted.

Phadiatop can be performed irrespective of age and the patient's skin condition, current medications (including anti-allergic), disease activity, and pregnancy.

Phadiatop identifies atopy very well. To rule in or out allergies at any age, Phadiatop is a world standard blood test. ■