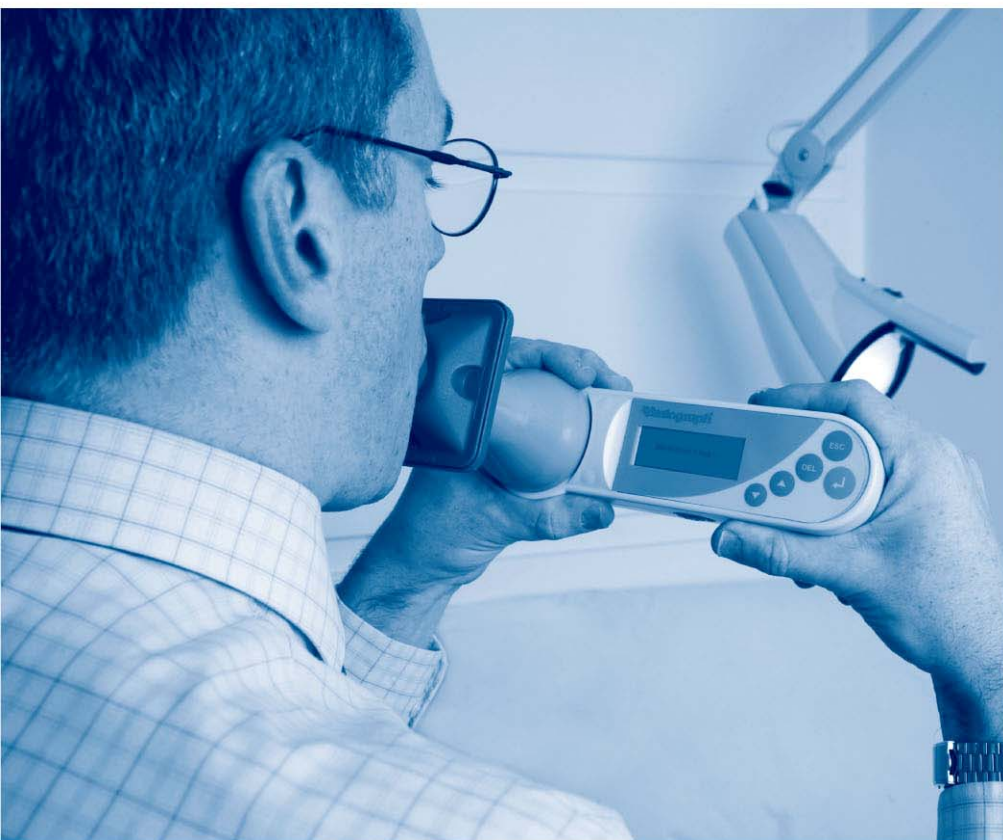


Allergy and Asthma

The Immunology Laboratory provides services relevant for those exposed to respiratory sensitisers (allergens) and other agents. Exposure to occupational and environmental agents can be measured using sensitive and specific immunoassays. Such objective data can be used to evaluate safety equipment and validate risk assessments. For those with symptoms, the measurement of specific antibodies in blood can assist Occupational Health professionals in the diagnosis and clinical management of ill health.



Measurement of airborne allergens

Exposure to allergens is an important risk factor for occupational asthma and allergy. Reducing exposure to allergens reduces the risk of developing disease. IOM can quantify exposure to an increasing range of allergens including domestic animals, rodent urinary proteins, mites, moulds and latex. We can identify high risk procedures and objectively assess the effectiveness of strategies designed to control exposure. As sensitisation to some potent allergens can occur at very low levels of exposure (ng per m^3), continuously high levels of control are required. Exposure measurements are a powerful tool in the ongoing education and training of personnel about this important risk to their health.

RESEARCH CONSULTING SERVICES

Multi-disciplinary specialists in Occupational and Environmental Health and Hygiene

Endotoxin

Endotoxins are microscopic components of gram negative bacteria that are powerful respiratory irritants. Symptoms may include difficulty in breathing, flu-like symptoms and fatigue. Guidance on acceptable levels of exposure is in place in The Netherlands and the US. Endotoxin exposures may be high in intensive farming of crops, animals and poultry, sewage workers, domestic waste handlers, composting operatives and engineers (via contaminated metal working fluids). Measurement of personal exposure to endotoxin can identify high risk procedures and objectively assess the effectiveness of strategies designed to control exposure. Measurements are also powerful tools in the ongoing education and training of personnel about this important risk to their health.

Measurement of specific antibodies

Measurement of specific IgE and specific IgG in blood can assist in the diagnosis of occupational respiratory disease. Specific IgE is the antibody that mediates allergic reactions; a positive test will help identify the allergen(s) causing allergic symptoms. Raised levels of specific IgG indicate exposure to agents and can support a diagnosis of allergic alveolitis (such as Farmers Lung). For Occupational Health specialists, these antibody tests can be used as a part of routine health surveillance, to identify and manage those at risk (for example atopics) and long term measurement of antibody levels may be used to monitor disease progression and the effectiveness of strategies to reduce exposure.

Case Study

We have been working with a major international pharmaceutical company to quantify exposure to allergens in the workplace. They have used the results to help them select equipment to reduce exposure, target the more effective use of respiratory protection and standardise allergen control policies across their global operation.

Our Commitment to You

- We work to UKAS accredited standards (formal accreditation for rodent assays is being sought) and are a member of other quality control schemes (NEQAS for specific IgE).
- We are committed to providing a fast, efficient and confidential service.
- The service is led by Dr Susan Gordon who has twenty years experience of research and consultancy in the field of occupational allergy.

Did you know?

You are only a phone call or a mouse click away from accessing the full range of **IOM Services**. These are underpinned by an unrivalled body of knowledge, and more than three decades of service provision and research. We provide a wide range of health and safety services encompassing many diseases and risk factors. We can help you with large issues and small, and our services include:

- occupational health support
- clinical examinations
- health surveillance
- COSHH assessments and monitoring
- Noise and vibration surveys and assessments
- laboratory analysis
- DSE and Manual handling assessments
- Ventilation testing
- Protective clothing testing
- Asbestos monitoring, surveys and management
- Face fit testing for respirators
- Legionella testing,
- Stress management
- control of exposure and personal protection
- health and safety management

Our purpose is to help you keep workers healthy. Our teams of scientists, clinicians, technicians and consultants include a number with international reputations in their fields of expertise. So, whatever your occupational health concerns, we'll give you access to real experts, who will listen, understand, and focus on providing the services and help that you need.

For further information please contact:

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