INTRODUCTION: The safety of home based immunotherapy is considered controversial. However, several sources consider careful implementation to be safe and efficacious.

METHODS: A blinded chart survey was used for assessment. We report the safety analyses of subcutaneous immunotherapy (SCIT) treatment protocol and contrast the incidence of systemic reactions (SR) to previously published reports.

RESULTS: Forty-three SR were reported for the 23,614 patients undergoing home-based SCIT which yielded an annual SR rate of 0.18% (per patient). These patients were administered 2,021,600 SCIT injections, following the protocol, which was associated with a SR rate of 0.003% (per injection). No Grade V anaphylactic reactions or deaths occurred in over 2 million injections administered.

DISCUSSION: This excellent safety profile in part is due to: 1. a pre-selection of patients to exclude those with a high risk for adverse reactions (e.g. those with severe persistent asthma); 2. a slow immunotherapy build-up phase designed to reach maintenance at 6 months rather than 3 months; and 3. appropriate patient training and education. In contrast, several previous studies have documented office-based SRs to SCIT ranging from 4 to greater than 7% (e.g. 3rd Practice Parameter Update). Thus, home-immunotherapy SR rate is significantly below previously published reports (p < 0.0001).

We conclude that the results of this report demonstrate the safety and usefulness of home-based immunotherapy protocol. Other studies have also demonstrated the safety of home-based SCIT in a low risk patient population. Our results, in conjunction with previous reports, should foster further consideration and discussion of home-based SCIT in a low risk patient population.