

Allergy Skin Testing

Airborne Allergens**Food Allergens**Medications**Venom

Skin testing is the preferred, most accurate method of testing for allergic antibody, or IgE. A test involves putting a small amount of a suspected substance, or allergen into the skin. The results are read 15-20 minutes after application of the allergens. A positive reaction is an itchy wheal (swelling) and flare (a surrounding area of redness). The skin test methods used are:

Prick Method: the skin is pricked with a drop of allergen vaccine. This generally feels no worse than a mosquito bite.

Intradermal Testing: This method is identical technique to PPD (or TB skin test), It consists of injecting a small amount of allergen just barley underneath the skin (the superficial layers).

Depending on the nature of your allergy problem, you will be tested to important airborne allergens in this regions, foods, medications, and/ or venom. The airborne allergens include several trees, grasses, weeds, as well as molds, dust mites, animal danders, and other pertinent allergens. The food allergens that may be tested depend on your suspected allergic reaction. Penicillin or another medication may be evaluated by skin testing. Also venom (fire ant, yellow jacket, honey bees, etc.) can be evaluated by skin testing.

Prick test will be performed on your arm or back. Intradermal tests are done on your arm. If you have a specific allergic sensitivity to one of the allergens, a red, itchy hive (caused by histamine release into the skin) will appear at that site on your skin within 15-20 minutes. These positive reactions will gradually disappear over a period of 30-60 minutes, and medicine to treat the itching may be given once the testing is complete. Occasionally local swelling at a test site will begin 4-8 hours after the skin test are applied, particularly at sites of intradermal testing. These reactions are not serious and will disappear over the next few days.

Interpreting skin test results require skillful correlation of the test results with your clinical history. Positive test indicate the presence of allergenic antibodies but your physician will determine if this is important. After skin testing, you will meet with your physician who will discuss the test results and make further recommendations regarding your treatment.

Medications that may interfere with testing:

Antihistamines: whether prescription or over the counter, **antihistamines should not be used 5-7 days prior to scheduled skin testing.** These medicines include pills for "cold" sinus tablets, hay fever medications, or oral treatments for itchy skin. Some of the names of these drugs include Actifed, **Allegra**, **Benadryl**, **Cetirizine**, **Claritin**, Clarinex, Dimetapp, Dristan, Drixoral, Rondec Tynatan, Trinalin, **Zyrtec**, and many others.

Antihistamine eye drops: include Elestat, Optivar, Pataday, Patanol, Zaditor, and some over the counter eye drops.

Antihistamine nasal sprays: include Astelin, Astepro, Patanase, and Omnaris. These nasal sprays need to be stopped **2 days before skin testing.**

Sleeping medicines that may contain antihistamines (Nytol, Tylenol PM, Advil PM, Etc.).

Stomach medicines that may contain antihistamines (Axid, Pepcid, Tagamet, and Zantac).

**If you have any questions whether or not you are using an antihistamine, please ask the nurse or the doctor.

Tricyclic Antidepressants: such medications may block skin testing results, but you should **NOT** stop such medication on your own. Some of the names of these medications are: Amitriptyline

(Elavil), Doxepin (Sinequan), and Imipramine (Tofranil). Please make the doctor and nurse aware if you are taking any of these medications.

Please let the physician and nurse know:

- If you have fever
- If you are wheezing
- If you are pregnant
- If you are taking any Beta Blockers (Sectral (acebutolol), Tenormin (atenol), betaxolol, Monacor (bisoprolol), Coreg (carvedilol) Lopressor, Toprol (metoprolol), Corgard (nadolo), Levantol (penbutolol), pindolol, Inderal (propranolol)
- If you are taking any glaucoma eye drops
- Any medications you are taking

Adverse reactions:

Skin testing will be administered in the Allergy, Asthma, & Immunology Center with a physician present since occasional reactions may require immediate action. Please note that these reactions are rare, but if a reaction should occur the staff is fully trained and emergency equipment is available. These reactions may consist of any or all of the following symptoms:

Itchy throat	Wheezing	Lightheadedness or faintness
Tightness in the throat or chest	Hives	Generalized itching
Nausea and/ or vomiting	Shock—(under extreme circumstances)	

You will be monitored during the skin testing. If you experience any of these symptoms during, or in the hours following skin testing you must notify medical personnel immediately.

I have read the patient information sheet on allergy skin testing and understand it. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the potential side effects of allergy skin testing and these questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that every precaution consistent with the best medical practice will be carried out to protect me or my child against such reactions.

_____	_____
Patient name printed	Date of Birth
_____	_____
Patient Signature (or parent or guardian)	Date
_____	_____
Witness	Date