

Allergy Institute P.C.

Patient Information for Allergy Skin Testing

Skin test: Skin tests are methods of testing for allergic antibodies. A test consists of introducing small amounts of the suspected substance, or allergen, into the skin and noting the development of a positive reaction (which consists of a wheal, swelling, and flare in the surrounding area of redness).

Prick (percutaneous) method: The skin is pricked with a plastic applicator that can test from 1 to 8 allergens at a time. These tests are usually performed on your arms or your back.

Intradermal method: This method is used when the prick method does not show much for results and further testing is needed to eliminate possible allergens. This method consists of injecting small amounts of allergen into the superficial layers of the skin. These tests are usually performed on your upper arm.

- If you have a specific allergic sensitivity to one of the allergens, a red, raised, itchy bump (caused by histamine release into the skin) will appear on your skin within 15 minutes. These positive reactions will gradually disappear over a period of 30-60 minutes. Typically no treatment is necessary for the itch. If uncomfortable, Hydrocortisone or Benadryl cream may be applied where the reaction occurred. Occasionally local swelling at a test site could begin 4-8 hours after the skin tests are applied, particularly at sites of intradermal testing. These reactions are not serious and will disappear over the next week or so. These should be measured and reported to the physician at your next visit.
- Interpreting the clinical significance of skin tests requires skillful correlation of the test results with the patient's clinical history. Positive tests indicate the presence of an allergic antibody which is not necessarily correlated with clinical symptoms.

Environmental testing: You will be tested to common airborne allergens. These include: trees, grasses, weeds, molds, dust mites, and animal dander.

Food Testing: There are two food tests we can administer in office. One includes 72 common foods such as: fruits, vegetables, egg, tea, coffee, rice, rye, wheat, oat, peanut, and meats. Second test includes: Fish, (including shellfish) and tree nuts. We can also draw bloodwork for more

Skin testing will be administered at this facility with a medical physician or other health care professional present.

Talk to your doctor if:

- You think you may be pregnant or are pregnant. Testing may be delayed.
- If you are taking beta-blockers.

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You May continue to use:

- Intranasal allergy sprays such as: Flonase, Rhinocort, Nasonex, Nasacort, Omnaris, Veramyst and Nasarel, etc.
- Asthma inhalers as they do not interfere with skin testing and should be used as prescribed.
- Any topical antihistamine or hydrocortisone

Precautions:

No prescriptions or over the counter oral antihistamines should be used **5 days prior** to scheduled skin testing. These include:

Claritin, Alavert, (Loratadine)	Allegra (Fexofenadine)	Dimetane (Brompheniramine)
Carbinoxamine (Palgic)	Zyrtec (Cetirizine)	
Xyzal (Levocetirizine)	Cyproheptadine	Pepcid (Famotidine)
Chlorpheniramine (Chlor-Trimeton)	Tavist (Clemastine)	Zantac (Ranitidine)
Hydroxyzine (Atarax, Vistaril)	Benadryl (diphenhydramine), which is in many cold relief medications and sleep aids	Tagamet (Cimetidine)
		Axid (Nizatidine)

After skin testing, you will consult with your physician or other health care professional who will make further recommendations regarding your treatment.

Please try not to cancel your appointment since the time set aside for your skin test is exclusively yours for which special allergens are prepared. If for any reason you need to cancel your appointment, please give us at least 48 hour notice, due to the length of time scheduled for skin testing. A last minute change results in a loss of valuable time that another patient might have utilized.