

Skin Testing for Allergies: Information and Consent

A skin allergy test can determine if your body has an allergic reaction to a known substance (an allergen). For most people, skin allergy skin testing takes about one hour.

Some drugs can cause problems with skin testing if they are taken within **seven days** before testing. We cannot test if you cannot stop taking these drugs or if you have skin disease that would make skin testing hard. In these cases, we can use a blood test instead.

Most drugs do not interfere with skin testing but make certain that your provider knows about every drug you are taking. Bring a list if needed.

Do you take any of these medications?

If you are taking any of these drugs, please talk to the doctor who prescribed them to confirm whether it is okay to stop them seven days before testing. This will allow you to get the best results from your allergy test.

Antihistamines	H2 Blockers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benadryl/diphenhydramine • Claritin/loratadine • Zyrtec/cetirizine • Allegra/fexofenadine • Xyzal/levocetirizine • Clarinex/desloratadine • Cyproheptadine • Carbinoxamine • Hydroxyzine • Azelastine nasal spray • Antivert/meclizine • Tylenol <u>PM</u> or Advil <u>PM</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pepcid/famotidine • Tagament/cimetidine • Zantac/ranitidine
Tricyclic Antidepressants	Steroids
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doxepin • Amitriptyline • Imipramine • Desipramine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral prednisone greater than 30mg a day for seven days • Any IV or intramuscular steroids • Topical steroids on forearms and/or back in the last four weeks • Local joint steroid injections = OK

STOP Singulair or Accolate (Leukotriene antagonists) the day before

Keep Taking:

- Nasal allergy sprays such as Flonase, Rhinocort, Nasonex, and Nasacort
- Your asthma inhalers as prescribed

WEST RALEIGH OFFICE
4600 Lake Boone Trail. Ste 100
Raleigh, NC 27607
919.787.1374

CARY OFFICE
1505 SW CARY PKWY, STE 301
Raleigh, NC 27511
919.367.9774

HOLLY SPRINGS OFFICE
781 Avent Ferry Rd. STE 300
Holly Springs, NC 27540
919.781.7171

BRIER CREEK OFFICE
10208 CERNY ST. STE 300
Raleigh, NC 27617
919.354.1290

GARNER OFFICE
300 Health Park Dr. Ste 210
Garner, NC 27529
919.662.8181

WAKE FOREST OFFICE
835B Wake Forest Business Park
Wake Forest, NC 27587
919.556.8454



We use two testing methods. Most patients tolerate both types of testing well.

Prick testing

Pricking the skin of your forearm or upper back allows us to test up to ten allergens at a time. Twenty minutes after you receive the pricks, we will check the test sites to see which allergens have caused a reaction. A wheal -- a tiny bump that looks like a mosquito bite -- may show sensitivity to an allergen.

Intradermal testing

Depending on the results of your prick testing, your doctor may need to learn more about some environmental allergens. In this case, you will have intradermal testing.

For this test, a tiny amount of a diluted allergen is injected just under the skin. After ten minutes, we will look for and measure the resulting wheal.

If intradermal testing is recommended for you, we talk with to see if you want to proceed. You do not have to have this test if you are anxious about needles, but it is often the best way to test someone for allergies. This testing is not done on young children. We do not do this type of test for foods.

Testing Information

Skin testing is completed at a Raleigh Capitol ENT medical facility. A doctor or other provider will be present since a reaction may require immediate therapy. **Severe reactions are rare, but the staff is fully trained, and emergency equipment is available in case this happens.**

Please let your provider know if you are pregnant or taking beta-blockers. Allergy skin testing will be postponed until after your pregnancy in the unlikely event of a reaction. Beta-blockers may make treating any reaction harder.

Ask your doctor any questions you have about allergy skin testing.

Please keep your skin test appointment. If for any reason you need to change your skin test appointment, give us at least 72 hours' notice or you will be charged a \$200.00 cancellation fee. This allows another patient to be scheduled in your place.

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Getting Your Results

After skin testing, you will have a follow-up appointment with your doctor who will make treatment recommendations.

If the tests are positive for allergies, treatment options may include:

- **Avoidance**
We may suggest changes in your diet, activities, and/or environment to decrease your exposure to allergens.
- **Medication**
If symptoms are not controlled with avoidance, certain drugs may control or reduce your symptoms.
- **Allergy immunotherapy**
If symptoms are not controlled with avoidance and/or drugs, we may recommend allergy shot (immunotherapy) treatment.

Each patient's allergy problems are unique. Once we confirm the allergens you are sensitive to, we will tailor a treatment plan to address your allergies.

I have read the patient information sheet on allergy skin testing, and I understand it. I was able 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 will be carried out to protect me against any reaction.

Patient signature _____ Date signed _____

Parent or legal guardian* signature _____ Date signed _____

*as a parent or legal guardian, I understand that I must accompany my child throughout the entire visit.

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