

Asthma & Allergy Physicians of Rhode Island

ALLERGY SKIN TESTING:

Skin testing is a quick, easy, and accurate way to assess allergen sensitivities. When you are skin tested, you will get results before you leave. You will not see a physician that day so a follow up is necessary to review results in detail and to come up with a course of action.

Skin testing takes about 1 hour. It may take longer depending on how many things you are being tested to.

Skin testing is done in 2 parts. The first part is done using the "Prick Testing" method. This is not a scratch but a poke to your skin using a sharp prong. Each prong that is used has different allergen solutions on it and we will determine how many you get based on what we are looking for. After 15 minutes we will read the results. We measure your response, which is usually similar to what a mosquito bite looks like.

The second part is called Intradermal (I.D.) Skin Testing -these are small needles. This portion of the testing is performed on your upper arms which are typically a less sensitive area so it is generally tolerated without any issue. You will get a certain amount of "I.D.'s" based on what the first portion of the test shows. Results from the second part of the test will be read after 15 minutes. Expect to keep the numbers that are written on your arms (we use a pen) for 48 hours to assess any delayed response. We will give you a sheet to record any delayed reaction.

Before skin testing there are some medications to avoid and some helpful tips to follow. Please refer to "Avoidance" sheet.

After skin testing we ask that you record any delayed reactions. Refer to "Delayed Reaction" sheet.

Our office also does skin testing on children. Testing on children is done on their back and depending on their age, they might get the intradermal portion of test. If the "I.D." portion of the test is warranted, we may prescribe a numbing cream prior to the appointment.

We also do special testing for medication and "Food Challenges." Details would be reviewed at your appointment.

FAQ:

Are the marks on my arms from testing permanent? No, they are temporary and depending on the severity of your allergy, the marks may take as little as one day to dissipate. Some molds on "I.D." testing may take a few weeks to completely vanish.

If the site of injection gets swollen, does that mean it's infected? No, in fact it is unlikely for you to get an infection from the test. It may be a delayed reaction and taking antihistamines and treating the site with ice may speed up the healing process. The injection site may even become warm to the touch - this is typically normal.

Can I take an antihistamine after testing? Yes, you can continue your normal regimen after testing.

How do I measure a delayed reaction? The skin testing assistant should review before leaving your appointment. If this was not reviewed, please call the office.

What do I do with the "Delayed Reaction Sheet?" Bring it with you to your next follow up ONLY if you had something to record. We will not ask for it so please present it to the provider that you see at your follow up.

What if the numbers rub off? Though we advise not to scrub off, sometimes the numbers fade away. If that happens and there is a delayed response, please call the office as we may be able to determine which number your reaction is.

Reminder for Skin Testing Patients

PLEASE WEAR SHORT SLEEVES ON THE DAY OF TESTING!!

DO NOT WEAR LOTION OR PERFUME ON THE DAY OF TESTING!!

Please stay off of ALL antihistamines 4 days prior to your test including, but not limited to, the medications listed below. If you are unsure if you are taking an antihistamine, please call our office or check with your pharmacy.

Oral Antihistamines:

- Loratadine (Claritin, Claritin-D, Alavert)
- Fexofenadine (Allegra, Allegra-D)
- Cetirizine (Zyrtec, Zyrtec-D)
- Desloratadine (Clarinex)
- Levocetirizine (Xyzal)
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)
- Hydroxyzine (Atarax, Vistiril)
- Cyproheptadine (Periactin)
- Ranitidine (Zantac)
- Cimetidine (Tagamet)
- Famotidine (Pepcid)
- Nizatidine (Axid)

Oral Motion Sickness/Nausea Medications:

- Dramamine (Dimenhydrinate)
- Compazine (Prochlorperazine)
- Antivert (Meclizine)
- Phenergan (Promethazine)

Oral Cold Medications:

- Chlorpheniramine (A Chew, Chlor-Trimeton, DAllergy, Deconamine, Durahist, Extendryl, Histavent, Omnihist, Rescon, Rynatan, Triaminic Cold and Allergy, Triaminic Multi-System)
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl – also found in Tylenol PM, Tylenol Cold and Sinus, Triaminic Night Time Cold and Cough, Advil Cold and Sinus, Sominex, Nytol)
- Brompheniramine (Dimetapp, Bromfed)
- Tripelennamine (Actifed, PBZ)

Nasal Spray Antihistamines:

- Astelin, Astepro (Azelastine)
- Dymista (Fluticasone + Azelastine)
- Patanase
- Eye Drop Antihistamines:
- Alomide, Livostin, Optivar, Pataday, Patanol, Bepreve
- Zatidor (Ketotifen)

Oral Tricyclic/Tetracyclic Antidepressants:

- Clomipramine (Anafranil)
- Imipramine (Tofranil, Janimine, Praminil)
- Desipramine (Norpramin, Pertofrane)
- Doxepin (Sinequan, Adapin)
- Amitriptyline (Elavil, Endep, Tryptomer)
- Amoxapine (Asendin)
- Nortriptyline (Pamelor, Norpress, Aventyl)
- Protriptyline (Vivactil)
- Trimipramine (Surmontil)
- Trazodone (Desyrel)

Oral Phenothiazines:

- Chlorpromazine (Thorazine)
- Thioridazine (Mellaril)
- Thiothixene (Navane)
- Trifluoperazine (Stelazine)

Certain eye drops such as PATADAY and BEPREVE should also be avoided.

SINGULAIR and PREDNISONONE are OKAY to take.

AMITRIPTYLINE and medications like this may need to be avoided 1 – 2 weeks prior to skin testing.

If you are currently taking a beta-blocker, such as METOPROLOL or ATENOLOL, we may ask you to refrain from taking it for 24 hours prior to your testing appointment.

If you are unable to keep your appointment, please give our office a 24 hour notice!

Thank you!