



Allergy Testing Patients' Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS ALLERGY SKIN TESTING?

Patients who are allergic frequently experience "allergy symptoms" such as stuffy/runny nose, sneezing, itchy/watery eyes, sinus pain and pressure, wheezing and hives. Allergy skin testing enables the doctor to see exactly what you are allergic to allowing them to make recommendations to treat your specific allergies.

WHAT AM I BEING TESTED FOR?

You will be tested for a variety of allergens including; dust mites, tree pollen, grass and weed pollen, mold spores, animal dander and foods.

HOW IS ALLERGY SKIN TESTING PERFORMED?

There are 2 different techniques that will be used. The first is "scratch testing" or percutaneous and the second is intradermal. Percutaneous testing involves a small "scratch" on the skin as a drop of the allergen is applied. Intradermal testing involves injecting a very small drop of allergen under the first layer of skin on your upper arm. Once the testing is applied we know within several minutes exactly what you are allergic to.

DOES TESTING HURT?

Skin testing can cause some discomfort, but is not painful. With percutaneous testing you will feel slight pressure and intradermal testing a pinprick and possibly some stinging. If you are allergic the areas that you show positive for may itch. Hydrocortisone cream can be applied if bothersome.

IS THERE ANYTHING I HAVE TO DO TO PREPARE FOR MY TESTING APPOINTMENT?

Yes, you will need to avoid taking any antihistamines for 5 days prior to your appointment. Please inform the nurse of any medications you are taking when you make your appointment. You will be advised if there are any other medications to avoid before your appointment.

HOW SOON WILL I GET THE RESULTS OF WHAT I AM ALLERGIC TO?

You will have the results of what you are allergic to the day you are tested.

WHAT'S THE NEXT STEP AFTER MY TESTING IS FINISHED?

Based on your allergy testing results, a personalized treatment plan will be developed to help control your allergy symptoms. Examples include; environmental control measures that you can do to decrease your exposure, medications to control daily symptoms and immunotherapy (allergy shots) to desensitize you to the things you are allergic to.

DOES MY INSURANCE COVER ALLERGY TESTING?

In most cases allergy testing is covered. Prior to your testing appointment we will contact your insurance company to verify your coverage. We will then contact you to explain your benefits and answer any questions you may have.