

How To Prepare for Your Allergy Skin Test

- **Allow 1-2 hours for skin testing.**
- **Wear comfortable clothing that allows easy exposure of your back and upper arms.** You will be asked to take your top off, so do not wear a one-piece outfit. You may also have vital signs and breathing tests administered during this process. It is best to avoid tight or restrictive clothing.
- Skin tests for allergic disorders have been used successfully for more than one hundred years. **Skin testing is the most reliable test for diagnosing allergies.** It is safe for all ages, from infants to the elderly. Skin testing is fast, relatively painless, more accurate, quicker and usually less expensive than blood testing. The most common symptoms are itching and swelling of the skin. During the test, your allergist will watch for a possible severe allergic reaction, but it rarely happens.
- There are two types of allergy skin testing, skin prick testing and intradermal skin testing. Skin prick testing is a simple, in office procedure in which tiny amounts of concentrated environmental allergens or food are applied to your back by making a small “scratch” on the surface of your skin. In 20 minutes, your test is read and, if you have allergies, you will have itching, redness and swelling like a mosquito bite where the allergen was placed.
- If your skin prick tests are negative but your physician still suspects you might have allergies, more sensitive intradermal skin testing may be undertaken in which a small amount of allergen is injected within the skin of the upper arm. This type of test takes an additional 20 minutes.
- **Any positive skin reactions will gradually disappear over a period of 30 to 60 minutes, and, typically, no treatment is necessary for any itchiness.** Swelling or redness at the skin test sites, which may appear several hours after your testing, are called "delayed reactions" and do not have any clinical significance. Any itching associated with these reactions can be managed with over the counter steroid creams and antihistamines. This may persist for a few days.

How to prepare for your Allergy Skin Test (cont'd)

- **You may be scheduled for skin testing to environmental allergens, foods, antibiotics, anesthetics, venoms, or other biological agents. The same guidelines apply.**
- Allergy skin tests are safe and minimally invasive. Results of skin testing have proven to be more accurate than blood testing in detecting allergic conditions. Our Board-Certified physicians are proficient in allergy skin testing. They will take the time to discuss your personalized allergy skin test profile with you and form a highly effective treatment plan with you before you leave your appointment that day.
- Medications containing antihistamines should be stopped one week prior to skin testing. [Please review our list of drugs to avoid/stop 7 days before skin testing on the next page.](#)

Drugs to Avoid

Stop 7 days before skin testing

- Due to continual development of new drugs, not all medications may be listed.
- **DO** stop all antihistamines (Benadryl, Zyrtec, Claritin, Allegra, Xyzal, Clarinex, Cyproheptadine, Hydroxyzine, Famotidine, Ranitidine, etc.) 7 days prior to skin testing. Please see page 2 for a complete list of antihistamines to avoid.
- **DO** stop these medications 7 days prior to skin testing: any over-the-counter medications with the word “**Allergy**” in it, most over-the-counter cough and cold medications, and over-the-counter sleep medications.
- **DO** stop all herbal supplements, including Milk Thistle, Saw Palmetto, St. John’s Wort, Astragalus, Feverfew, Green Tea, Licorice for 7 days prior to skin testing.
- Do **NOT** stop:
 - **Asthma** medications (Singulair/Montelukast, inhaled short-acting beta agonists such as Albuterol/ProAir/Xopenex, inhaled corticosteroids and inhaled long-acting beta agonist/corticosteroid combinations)
 - **Antibiotics**
 - **Oral steroids** (Medrol dose-pack, Prednisone)
 - **Certain heartburn medications** (Prilosec, Nexium, Prevacid, Zegerid, Aciphex, Dexilant, and Protonix)
 - **Certain nasal medications** (Afrin, Atrovent, Flonase, Nasacort, Nasonex, Rhinocort, Veramyst, Qnasl, Zetonna)
 - **Certain oral medications** (Phenylephrine, Pseudoephedrine, Guaifenesin, Mucinex)
- Do **NOT** stop SSRI’s and SNRI’s. Certain antidepressant medications do not interfere with allergy testing:
 - **SSRI’s** (Celexa/Citalopram, Lexapro/Escitalopram, Prozac/Sarafem/Fluoxetine, Paxil/Pexeva/Paroxetine, Zoloft/Sertraline)
 - **SNRI’s** (Effexor/Venlafaxine, Pristiq/Desvenlafaxine, Cymbalta/Duloxetine)
- Please look at the chart on the next page for a full list of medications to avoid 7 days prior to skin testing. Do **NOT** stop medications in the last 3 categories of this chart (“Anti-anxiety”, “Antidepressants” or “Other” categories) without consulting with the prescribing physician.
- **IF YOU ARE NOT SURE ABOUT A MEDICATION, PLEASE CALL BEFORE YOU TAKE IT.**

Drugs to Avoid

Stop 7 days before skin testing

<p>ANTIHISTAMINES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACRIVASTINE • ACTIFED • ADVIL ALLERGY • ADVIL PM • AEROKIDS • AH CHEW • ALAVERT • ALLERHIST • ALLERTAN • ALDEX • ALLEGRA • ALLEGRA D • ANTIHIST • ANTIVERT • ATARAX • ATROHIST • AZATADINE • BENADRYL • BIOHIST • BONINE • BROMPHED • BROMPHED PD • BROMPHENIRAMINE • BROVEX • CARBINOXAMINE • CETIRIZINE • CHLORPHENIRAMINE • CHLORTRIMETON • CLARINEX • CLARINEX D • CLARITIN • CLARITIN D • CLEMASTINE • COMTREX • CONTAC • CORICIDIN • CYCLIZINE • CYPROHEPTADINE • DECONAMINE • DESLORATIDINIE • DEXODRYL • DIMENHYDRINATE • DIMETAPP • DIPHENHYDROMINE • DOXYLAMINE • DRAMAMINE • DRIXORAL • DURADRYL • DURAHIST • DURATAN • DUTUSS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DYTAN • ENDAL • EXCEDRIM PM • EXTENDRYL • FEXOFENADINE • HISTEX • HISTUSSIN • HYDRAMINE • HYDROXYZINE • LEVOCETIRIZINE • LORATIDINE • KRONOFED • MAREZINE • MECLIZINE • NALDECON • NALEX • NOVAHISTINE • NYQUIL • OMNIHIST • PEDIATAN • PEDIACARE • PEDIOX • PERIACTIN • PHENIRAMINE • PHRLEX • POLY-HISTINE • PROMETHEAZINE • PYRILAMINE • RESCON • ROBITUSSIN ALLERGY • RONDEC • RUTUSS • RYNTANN • RYNEZE • SEMPRESX • SINGLET • SOMINEX • SUDAL • SUDAFED COLD/ALLERGY • TACARYL • TANDUR DM • TAVIST • THERAFLU NIGHTIME • TRIAMINIC • TRIPOLIDINE • TRINALIN • TUSSIONEX • TYLENOL ALLERGY • TYLENOL COLD • TYLENOL PM • UNISOM SLEEP GELS • VISTARIL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ZYRTEC • XYZAL • ZONALON • ZYRTEC D <p>ANTI-NAUSEA MEDICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COMPAZINE • PHENERGAN • PROMETHAZINE • TIGAN <p>NASAL SPRAYS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ASTELIN • ASTEPRO • AZELASATINE • DYMISTA • OLOPATIDINE • PATANASE • RYALTRIS <p>REFLUX MEDICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AXID • CIMETADINE • FAMOTADINE • NIZATADINE • PEPCID • RANITADINE • TAGAMET • ZANTAC <p>EYEDROPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALOCRIL • ELESTAT • LIVOSTIN • OPTICHROME • OPTIVAR • PATADAY • PATANOL • ZADITOR <p>ANTI-ANXIETY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ALPRAZOLAM • ATIVAN • CLONAZEPAM • DIAZEPAM • ESTAZOLAM • HALCION • KLONOPIN • LORAZEPAM • MIDAZOLAM • PROSOM • RESTORIL • TEMAZEPAM • VALIUM • XAN 	<p>ANTIDEPRESSANTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ADAPIN • ANAFRANIL • AMITRIPTYLINE • AMOXAMPINE • ASENDIN • AVENTYL • CLOMIPRAMINE • DESIPRAMINE • DESYREL • DOXEPIN • ELAVIL • IMPRAMINE • LIMBITROL • LUDIOMIL • MAPROTILINE • MIRTAZAPINE • NETAZADONE • NORPRAMIN • NORTRIPTYLINE • NORPRAMINE • OLEPTRO • PAMELOR • PROTRIPTYLINE • QUESTIAPINE • REMERON • SERZONE • SINEQUAN • SURMONTIL • TOFRANIL • TRIAVIL • TRAZODONE • TRIMIPRAMINE • VIVACTIL <p>OTHER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BENTYL • BENZTROPINE • CATAPRESS • CHLORPROMAZINE • CLONIDINE • COGENTIN • DIAZEPAM • HALDOL/ HALOPERIDOL • DICYCLOMINE • PARLODEL • RESPERDAL • RESPERADONE • SEROQUEL • TOFRANIL • THORAZINE • QUETIAPINE
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