



ALLERGY TESTING

When should I be allergy tested?

The doctor will base her decision on history, past medical history, family history, physical examination. Knowing what you are allergic to and your allergy seasons, helps to determine if allergy medications will help and how long your need to take allergy medications. If medications are not working or you are taking them year round, we should consider allergy testing so that we can give you more specific information on how to manage your allergies or consider immunotherapy (shots or drops).

How Should I Prepare?

DO NOT TAKE Claritin or Claritin-D for 7 days prior to your test.

Do not take for three days prior to your allergy test:

Medications: Antihistamines or anything containing one (see attached list)
Muscle relaxers or tranquilizers
Antidepressants (check with the physician who prescribed the medication prior to stopping the medication)
Sedatives
Nasal sprays
Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, etc.) and Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs
Aspirin, Excedrin, or Alka-Seltzer
Large doses of vitamin C

You may take the following medications up to the time of your test:

Asthma medications (try to avoid for 6 hours before the test)
Tylenol (regular or extra-strength only)
Birth control pills
*Blood pressure medications (except as noted on attached)
Hormones
Fluid pills
Plain decongestants (those with no antihistamines)



*If you take Beta Blockers (see attached list) you **can not** have allergy testing or injections. Please discuss this with the allergy nurse before your test or any allergy injections. Also, please notify the allergy staff if you have any cardiac problems, take cardiac medications, or have a pacemaker.

The test will take from 1 to 2 hours. Please wear something short-sleeved or sleeveless and bring a pair of shorts. When being seen in the allergy clinic for either testing of treatment, please do not wear scented products (body lotions, perfumes, cologne, hair spray, etc.) which may affect your fellow patients. If it is necessary to cancel your test, please notify us at least 24 hours prior to your appointment. If your test is scheduled on a Monday, please call the answering service at (337) 989-4453 extension 250 or (337) 237-6997 and ask them to notify the office manager. Please complete the history questionnaire, food diet diary, and any other paperwork that you were given and bring them with you the day of your test.

What are the symptoms that allergies cause?

The list of symptoms that allergies can cause is lengthy. The symptoms for allergies include but are not limited to: runny nose, stuffy nose, watery eyes, itchy eyes, hay fever, asthma, diarrhea, constipation, eczema, rashes, coughing, wheezing, fever, postnasal drip, sore throat, dark circles under the eyes, reddish or pink circles under the eyes, stomach problems, headache, migraine, hyperactivity, mood swings, irritability. Immediate reaction (IgE) allergies can cause anaphylaxis which can be life-threatening and fatal if not treated properly.

What type of testing do you do?

In our office we do allergy testing either through prick test, individual needle sticks or blood draw. The prick test (which is sharp plastic device) that is performed on the forearms or thighs, that pricks the skin with antigens for allergy test. The individual needle sticks (IDT) on the upper arms, the antigens are placed under the skin with a needle creating a wheal. The RAST test (blood drawn in a lab). We will discuss which test is best for you.

Does allergy testing hurt?

It can be a little discomfort. A topical anesthetic prescription can be given if requested. The topical anesthetic may be applied to area 30 minutes prior to appointment. The allergy nurse can help advise where to apply.



How long will the test take?

The test can take approximately 45 minutes to 2 hours depending on the age of the patient

What are the signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis?

Itchy skin, hives, swelling or flushing to the lips, throat, tongue, wheezing, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, sense of impending doom, loss of consciousness. You will be given a prescription for an Epi-pen when on immunotherapy. If you are not sure if you are having a reaction please go to the nearest emergency room for immediate evaluation.